1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

A plant called tyäñänou is used as perfume, as a wash for the hair, and as a minor medicine. Bunches of the plant were used as perfume. A tea boiled of it is thought to make the hair grow while perfuming it. Such a tea is also poured into the nostrils as a remedy for headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1920).

Niibyouäxtjin is used as perfume. The stems and leaves are chewed and applied to the body (specimen Museum No. 50–1853).

Tsaⁿsübin is used as perfume. It is chewed, and rubbed on the hair (specimen Museum No. 50–1792).

One ingredient of incense is the callosity from the leg of a horse above the knee. This is cut up fine, and burned with sweet-grass. It is also worn on the body on a string.

Pine-nuts or other conifer-seeds are used for pemmican (specimen Museum No. 50–1913).

For embroidery, dark fibrous water-plants, atᵃhin (the Arapaho atahinaⁿ), are used (specimen Museum No. 50–1891).

Quills are dyed yellow with a solution from a conifer-lichen, no doubt the widely used *Evernia vulpina*, called otsahaaⁿ (specimen Museum No. 50–1873).

TRIBAL CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION.

The Gros Ventre ceremonial organization is akin to that of the Arapaho with such differences as would be expected from the differences in language and the period of separation of the two tribes. The fundamental feature of this organization, the grouping of men by ages and the observance of a series of a half-dozen ceremonies in order according to age, is common to the two tribes. The ceremonies vary somewhat, and in a few cases their names or order have been changed; but among both tribes there are about six regular consecutive men's ceremonies, one or two that are preliminary or somewhat outside of this series, a single ceremony for women corresponding to those for men, and the sun-dance, which is included by the Indians in the enumeration of their grouped ceremonies, but differs from the others in not being connected with age, or with any society-like association of individuals.

Among the Gros Ventre the dancing-lodge for these ceremonies — which is erected in the centre of the camp-circle, and, like this, opens to the east — is constructed of two large tents. The lodge is open above, and appears to be oval or round in shape. The dancers, before beginning the ceremony, secure old men, who are called their "grandfathers," and are their instruct-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

●796 ors and directors through the dance. By these old men the dancers are painted in the dancing-lodge every morning during the ceremony. The dancers' wives take a more prominent part in the ceremonies among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho. They are painted at the same time as their husbands by his "grandfather." Every night during the ceremony there are certain observances between the "grandfathers" and the dancers' wives, who leave the camp-circle together in order that the women may receive medicine from the old men. This practice is much more developed among the Gros Ventre than among the Arapaho.

Whether there is in each dance a preparatory period in which the dancers' regalia are made and they are instructed in the ceremony by their "grandfathers," as among the Arapaho, is not clear in the case of the Gros Ventre. The dancing itself in all of the age-ceremonies goes on for four days,[1] and, in some cases, nights. On the last day the dancers leave the lodge, and [361] dance for gifts before the tents of prominent men at different places in the camp-circle. Immediately upon this the camp breaks. The dancers, with the property they have received in gifts, go in advance, and lay the presents on the ground. The camp comes up in a body and makes a rush; the property is seized and divided. The dancers form in a circle, and at the conclusion of four dances rush off to race. On their return the ceremony is ended. Only in the case of the crazy-dance do these ceremonies of the fourth day appear to take place without the camp-circle having been broken; [786] and for four days thereafter the camp remains in position, giving the participants in the ceremony opportunity for the license which is a part of this dance.

All the ceremonies, including the sun-dance and the women's dance, are made as the result of the pledge of an individual in the hope of deliverance from death or danger, either of himself or of a relative. If a member of a company of men who are of the proper age to make the crazy-dance has a relative whom he loves, and whose death from sickness is feared, he may say, "Such and such an old man (naming him) shall put up the crazy-lodge for me this summer." If the sick person dies, the dance is not held. Sometimes a person who is ill himself pledges to make the dance on his recovery. The pledger of any dance is called ye'nouhuxtj[1] (Arapaho, ya'nahūt[1]). A man in danger in war, or one who has been wounded, may also pledge the dance. The time for the dances is apparently summer. For the sun-dance, spring or early summer, when the trees are full leaved, is [616] specified; and it is added that sometimes, after the pledge is given, the people have to wait all winter to make the ceremony. In the case of the crazy-dance, it is stated that two divisions of the young men of the tribe,

[1] Probably to be interpreted as three nights and three days.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

each of which has a ceremony of its own rivalling that of the other (respectively the war-dance and the star-dance), compete in a horse-race, with the agreement that the beaten party is to put up the crazy-lodge. It does not seem that this is a common procedure.

The Gros Ventre abandoned their dances much earlier than the Arapaho, and almost nothing of the organization remains now, except a memory. It is somewhat difficult to procure precise details of the procedure, especially in the older dances. In great part, the regalia used have also perished, and it has been possible to secure only a very few pieces. These show, as do the descriptions given by the Indians, that the objects and decorations used are quite similar to those of the Arapaho. The distinction of several degrees purely of honor within each ceremony, which is so characteristic of the Arapaho age-dances, is also found in the Gros Ventre, though it seems that the distinctions made and the number of degrees are not quite so elaborate. This is evidenced, not only by the fact that few degrees are described by the Gros Ventre, a fact which might be due to their longer disuse of the ceremonies, but also by circumstances such as the one that certain regalia, which in the Arapaho dog-dance are worn only by the members of the second and third highest degrees, are among the Gros Ventre the common regalia of all participants; only the highest degree of the Arapaho being retained by the Gros Ventre as distinct.

The Gros Ventre call their entire ceremonial organizations benaa"wu, a dialectic form of the Arapaho hayaa"wu, and, like it, probably meaning "all the lodges." The members of the age-societies are called beniinen, commonly translated at the present day as "soldiers," etymologically probably "all-men," or "all-(?)-men."

The ceremonies of the Gros Ventre benaa"wu, with the age-dances given in order from youth to old age, are the following:—

Açeiha"w"	Sacrifice-lodge,[1] sun-dance
	Star-dance, partial preliminary
Nôuhâ"w"	Fly-lodge, first dance
Haha"tyâ"w"	Crazy-lodge, second dance
Nôuhâ"w"	Kit-fox lodge, third dance
Hotibyâ"w"	Dog-lodge, fourth dance
Nanâ"nahâ"w"	Tomahawk-lodge, fifth dance
Blitahâ"wu"	Drum (?) lodge, sixth (?) dance
Benuxteâ"w"	Buffalo(?) dance, women's dance.

The members of these successive age-ceremonies are called respectively

[1] Once translated "looked-at-lodge."

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796
561

hotohuūu, nōubän, hahā^{n}tyänen, nōuhunen, hotibyí, nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts or perhaps hiityaäa^{n}sūts, biitaxäänen; or "stars," "flies," "crazy-men," "kit-fox men," "dogs," "soldiers" or "having-war-spikes," and "drum (?) men."

171
796

Aside from changes in the order of the ceremonies, of which there are several, the chief known differences between this progressive dance-series of the Gros Ventre and that of the Arapaho are two. One of these differences is, that the first dance of the Gros Ventre is the fly-dance, which the Arapaho lack altogether. The second difference is, that the fifth dance of the Gros Ventre, the nana^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}, seems to combine the characteristics of the corresponding Arapaho dance (the hinanaha^{n}wu or fifth) and of the first dance (the Arapaho hiitcëäoxa^{n}wu). In its name, its place in the series, and the age of its dancers, the Gros Ventre fifth ceremony agrees with the similarly named Arapaho fifth ceremony; but in the use of war-club-like implements carried by the dancers, and in the symbolic connection of the dance with the buffalo, there is an agreement with the Arapaho first dance. This first dance of the Arapaho is not represented by a separate ceremony among the Gros Ventre. A third possible difference between the two systems is, that no information was obtained regarding any Gros Ventre lodge corresponding to the oldest men's sweat-house among the Arapaho; but it is not unlikely that something similar formerly existed.

The several changes in order of the dances between the two tribes imply something more than mere change of position in the series. For instance, the displacing of the kit-fox lodge and of the biitaha^{n}wu, both of which are early ceremonies in the Arapaho and late ones among the Gros Ventre, involves a change of the age of the participants, and therefore necessarily, in some degree, of the character of the ceremony itself, since, the greater the age of the participants in the ceremony, the more sacred it is.

The following comparison shows the respective places of each ceremony in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonial series.

Ceremony.	Arapaho.	Gros Ventre.
Sun-dance	Men of any age	Men of any age
Kit-fox lodge	First preliminary	Third dance
Star-dance	Second preliminary	Outside of regular series
Fly-lodge	Lacking	First dance
Hiitcëäoxa^{n}wu	First dance	Lacking (see Hinanaha^{n}wu)
Biitaha^{n}wu	Second dance	Probably sixth dance
Crazy-lodge	Third dance	Second dance
Dog-lodge	Fourth dance	Fourth dance
Hinanaha^{n}wu	Fifth dance	Fifth dance
Seven old men	Sixth ceremony	Lacking?
Bänaxta^{n}wu	Women's dance	Women's dance

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The place of the biitaha"wu is not certain, as no informants were found who would positively express themselves on this matter. It is universally regarded as having been the most sacred and most dangerous of all the ceremonies, these qualities being thought to have led to its abandonment before any of the other dances. It can probably be concluded from this that it was last in the series, and performed by the oldest men.

As among the Arapaho, but somewhat more clearly, each dance refers symbolically to a certain animal. This symbolism is as follows.

The fly-dance takes its name from flies or mosquitoes, and was given or instituted by a mosquito. During part of the ceremony the dancers imitate the actions of mosquitoes.

The crazy-dance has comparatively little reference to any animal. The participants, however, wear anklets of badger-skin, and an entire badger-skin is used in ceremonies at the time of starting the dancing.

The kit-fox lodge was given by the kit-foxes, and a kit-fox skin is used somewhat analogously to the badger-skin in the crazy-dance.

In the dog-dance the dancers of highest degree represent shaggy dogs. It is also said that the participants in the ceremony largely eat dogs during its course. Among the Arapaho a dog is said to have instituted this lodge, and the Gros Ventre have a similar myth.

In the nana"naha"w" the dancers sing for the buffalo, and it is said that they always succeed in causing them to appear near the camp. Among the Arapaho the dancers represent both buffalo and prairie-chickens. The symbolic reference to prairie-chickens among the Gros Ventre is found in their sun-dance; their equivalent of the Arapaho rabbit-tent in this ceremony being called "prairie-chicken tent," and the singers in it "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-hens."

The biitaha"w", as among the Arapaho, has connection with thunder. The dancers are painted over the body with dots which represent hail. If one of them violates the regulations of the dance, it is thought that it will begin to rain and that the offender may be struck by lightning. The Gros Ventre have an additional symbolic connection of their sun-dance with thunder, which is not strictly paralleled among the Arapaho.

The women in their dance among both tribes represent buffalo, and the actions gone through in this ceremony are in both tribes probably more directly imitative of the animals symbolized than in any of the men's ceremonies.

What has been said about the Arapaho in regard to the relation of the entire ceremonial organization to the lives of the men of the tribe, and in regard to the relative importance of the religious, military, and social functions of the age-companies constituting the organization, appears to apply

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

equally to the Gros Ventre. The Gros Ventre, however, used a method of organization as regards the performance of the age-ceremonies of which nothing was heard among the Arapaho. The men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company, but in several; the total number of the companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each of these companies had a name, which it retained throughout its existence, irrespective of the dance it had last performed; and each held its ceremonies without participating in those of any other company. It seems that, when one of these companies had made all the dances, the surviving old men grouped together the available young men in the tribe, and formed them into a new company of the same name. With this organization it was possible for each ceremony to be performed in the tribe much more frequently than if all those of an age and previous ceremonial experience entitling them to make a certain dance had performed this together, as appears to have been the case among the Arapaho; or the ceremony could be given at short intervals without involving the repetition of it for a considerable number of times by the same body of men. The Gros Ventre companies could and did repeat the ceremonies, especially the earlier ones, but do not seem to have done so more than once or twice.

The names of these companies [illegible]embled nicknames, and for the most part had a character not very different from the clan names in use among the Gros Ventre and other Plains tribes, in which a certain humorous or derisive element prevails. The following are the companies whose names were obtained:

Green-grass, wiŋoçetyi
Young-sheep, wnotei
Small-horses, tsũaⁿçibyi
Rosebushes, ynaniisⁱe
Calves (of leg), itsiitsin
Sleeping-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, hitenanaⁿkataũaⁿhei
Grass-in-their-pockets, wasõontinaⁿyhats
Big-bellies, tjiitãⁿts
White-horns, nanãⁿtsⁱenitãⁿts
White-backs, nanãⁿtsⁱetãⁿts
Men-across-the-river, haⁿsõitjãnen
Different-from-benilmen, kaaⁿsõhenilnen
Ugly-dogs, wasaⁿtibyi
Seed-necklaces, hityⁱisõtyãⁿ
Having-back-fat, hiinanihits
White-noses, nanaⁿtsõõhãⁿts
Eat-enough-to-last-over-night, ãteinotãⁿts
Holding-dogs'-tails, hotibyi naⁿninaⁿnãⁿts
White-blankets, nanaⁿtsõubãnts
Fur-wrapped-wands, hiibiçõuts
Bad-horns, wanaaⁿsõnitãⁿts
(? Stars, hotohuũu)
(? Feathered-sword-wands, iikokõuuts)
(? Having-spikes, hiitjaũaⁿsũts)

The list is probably not complete, as, with the disuse of the ceremonies, the formation of these companies has been discontinued for some time.

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

It seems impossible to tell at present whether these and the additional ones that there may have been, all existed contemporaneously, or whether some grew up as others died out. The last few named are doubtful as true companies. The Indians sometimes include the dances themselves among these companies, calling their members "flies," "dogs," "kit-fox men," and so on. This is, of course, a cross-division, as each of the numerous companies in turn makes, for instance, the fly-dance. During and after the ceremony its members are called "flies," as well as by the name of their company. As there is a star-dance, it is therefore possible that there was no true star company. The sword-wands and war-spikes are also somewhat doubtful. These names refer to objects used as regalia in the Arapaho first dance and in part in the Gros Ventre fifth dance. The participants in the Gros Ventre fifth dance, it seems, were also called by the latter name. It is therefore probable that these two names refer to dances and not to real companies. 561 796

The companies held together, to a certain extent, outside of their dances. They were likely to act together in war, and there was a spirit of rivalry between them. In the sun-dance, and possibly on other ceremonial occasions, the younger men of the tribe took part in certain actions by companies.

The following specific statements of the ceremonial experiences of a few of the old men of the tribe alive in 1901 will make the general scheme of the organization more concrete.

A man known as Bill Jones, reputed to be the oldest man in the tribe, belonged to the "big-belly" company. Of this, only one other member survived at that date. He himself had been keeper of one of the sacred pipes; and he and his "big-belly" companion, together with the five survivors of the next oldest company, were spoken of as the seven oldest men of the tribe. As all the Gros Ventre ceremonies have been discontinued, it is not possible to deduce from this statement with certainty that these seven men would in former times have constituted a definite body with distinct ceremonial powers and observances, like the Arapaho water-sprinkling old men. This man had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance twice, the kit-fox dance twice, the dog-dance, and the nana"naha"w". He had not made the biitaha"w". Younger men than himself have seen this; but it appears to have been abandoned some time before he became of age to take part in it. He had made the star-dance before the fly-dance. He had also taken the part of the man who shoots a buffalo (in the women's dance?). 159 561 796

Bull-Robe, now dead, a renowned warrior, belonged to the next age-company, "those-who-eat-to-last-all-night." He had made the fly-dance, the crazy-dance, the kit-fox dance, and the dog-dance. The nana"naha"w" seems to have been discontinued before he reached it. In the first three of his dances he was one of the leaders, or recipients of special degrees.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Subsequently he was a "grandfather" in the crazy-dance, but in none of the other ceremonies. He never participated in the sun-dance, having had no occasion to do so, he said. Nevertheless he once was the man selected during the sun-dance to kill a buffalo with one arrow, the buffalo's skin being cut up into thongs with which the rafters of the lodge are fastened. He succeeded in killing the buffalo with one arrow.

Another man, now middle-aged, belonged to the "holding-to-a-dog's-tail" company. He made successively the fly-dance, the star-dance, and then the crazy-dance.

Star and War Dances.

At present the organization into comparatively small companies is no longer maintained. In its place there is a division of the young men of the tribe into two groups, one of which practises, or did until recently, the star-dance; the other, the grass or war dance. The latter is universally stated to be a recent importation from the Sioux, apparently within the present generation. The star-dance, however, is an old ceremony, it is claimed; and this assertion is borne out by the occurrence among the Arapaho of the analogous star-dance. Among the Arapaho the star-dance, like the kit-fox dance, is a preliminary which appears to be gone through by all the men of the tribe, but has neither the standing, the organization, nor the definite observances and regalia of the subsequent ceremonies. Among the Gros Ventre the star-dance was formerly also outside the regular series of dances. It is generally spoken of as having been a warrior dance, made at any time and on any suitable occasion, and without the rigorously prescribed course of other dances. Some men seem to have made it before the fly-dance, and others afterward. Even in former times, however, before the war-dance had come among the Gros Ventre, the star-dance included only part of the young men of the tribe. The old men surviving from certain companies have never taken part in the star-dance, and explain this by the fact that there was rivalry between their company and the star-dancers. It might thus, perhaps, seem that a star company had a ceremony of its own, the star-dance, from which the members of rival companies naturally held aloof; but it is very improbable that only one age-company parallel to the others, and none of these others, should have had a distinctive ceremony. It is also improbable that this company, being one of many, should have been so large as to include about half of the men of the tribe, for it appears that some such large proportion took part in the star-dance. This makes it almost impossible to believe that there existed a star company exactly

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NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

analogous to the "green-grass" and "young-sheep" and other companies, but having an additional ceremony confined to itself. On the other hand, if the "stars" were not one of the age-companies, it is hard to see with what groups of men they competed. It is therefore not improbable that there formerly existed among the Gros Ventre a star-society, which had a ceremony of its own, and which, while based partly on age in being constituted of young men, was outside and independent of the scheme of the beman"wu, with which it had no, or only indirect, relation, and with whose working out it must in some measure have conflicted. Such a society, which would be a true society in being based on a membership determined by choice, purchase, initiation, or supernatural experience, — in other words, by selection, would be of a type of organization quite distinct from the ordinary Gros Ventre or Arapaho age-company performing in the course of its existence an entire series of tribal ceremonies, but would have abundant parallels in other ceremonial societies on the Plains and elsewhere. Its presence would therefore be readily explainable as an incipient intrusion due to the cultural influence of some other tribe, the chief objection to such an explanation being the occurrence of the star-dance also among the Arapaho, but without a known association with a special society. This suggested character of the Gros Ventre star-society and star-dance fits the facts, but is after all only hypothetical; and altogether the relation of the ceremony to the remainder of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organizations is not yet clear.

The star-dance as formerly held is said to have lasted four days and nights. There might be further subsequent dancing. At the beginning of the ceremony, the dancers went to four places at the camp-circle facing or representing the four cardinal directions, and at each place danced before the tent of a prominent man. The owner of the tent gave away property and filled a pipe for the dancers, after smoking which they proceeded to the next one. After having danced in the four places, they danced in the middle of the camp-circle. This might be in the open air, or in a lodge made of two large tents combined. The singers were four old men, who accompanied themselves on small hand drums. The dancers' wives sat behind these four old men and sang with them. The dancer's relatives at times went to them and danced with them, taking their rattles and temporarily using them. The dancers' bodies seem to have been variously decorated; but they had no distinctive regalia except rattles. These were alike in general character, being loop-shaped, and decorated with gaudy paint and attachments, but there seems to have been no attempt at making them uniform. The dancing-lodge was elliptical, with the door towards the east and a fire near the western end. The singers were at this end, and the dancers near them, in two lines, along the sides of the lodge, facing each other. In dancing

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NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[146] they did not stay in one place, but at times moved about. They shook their rattles constantly. They did not sing, but uttered a pressed-out "Hah." Two atsaan (assistants or servants of the dance) attended near the door. [624] They brought back such of the dancers as became exhausted from lack of sleep and left the ceremony. Two men who had fought and struck a mounted enemy while they themselves were mounted, rode on horseback. When they went to dance, the assistants went to them and helped them dismount. If the dancers were inactive, these two men went about among them to make them arise. If the dancers remained on the ground, they struck them with their whips. The spectators outside lifted up the bottom of the tent and looked underneath; or, as the tent was not very high (the lodge being roofless), those who were on horseback looked over it.

534 293 The Gros Ventre star-rattles consist of a tube of rawhide, an inch or less in diameter, bent on itself into a hoop three or four inches across, and attached to a stick handle half a foot or more in length. Apparently one end of the tube projects out from the hoop forming the head of the rattle, sufficiently to allow the stick to be inserted. The rawhide is painted, and ornamented with three or five bunches of feathers. The handle is wrapped with cloth, the upper end of which usually is cut into a small fringe at the base of the head of the rattle, while the lower end hangs free beyond the handle. The general outline of the rattle is similar to the Arapaho star-rattle, this having a round or kite-shaped flat head at the end of the handle. The hoop feature is, however, wanting in the Arapaho rattles, which [531] are without a perforation. The Gros Ventre decorations of their rattles — whether feathers, cloth attachments, or painting — are usually crude and gaudy. It seems that the rattles now in use are a degenerate modern form. [197] In the majority of cases the feathers attached are dyed: some are cut from the quill. This indicates a recent modifying influence. Many of the feathers are cut off transversely. This may or may not be an old feature. The piece shown in Fig. 31 has least of the base qualities of these rattles, and is a probable approximation to the older type.

Of some of the specimens to be seen in the Museum, descriptions are here given.

Fig. 31 (50-1783). Handle covered with red flannel, which hangs below the handle about two feet. Fringe of same at base of head, and same forms periphery of head. Rawhide of head painted blue, red on inside of loop. A string appears to have been wound around the head while the hide was fresh, and removed after the painting, leaving radiating white depressions. Head ornamented at top and sides with three bunches of four black-and-white, squarish, half-downy feathers attached by thongs. At the top there is also an eagle-feather. Handle wound with thong, forming at the end a loop to pass over the wrist. The head of this rattle was said to represent a star.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

796 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the [534] crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624 with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626] with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Recently these two bodies of young men performing respectively the star-dance and the war-dance have supplanted entirely the older, more numerous age-companies. In late years they have taken the place of the age-companies in the ceremonies connected with the erection of the sun-dance lodge. There was then considerable rivalry between them, and it is said that a member of either company who should take part with the other would be abused by his companions, and perhaps have his clothes torn. Recently also the two groups have had certain social functions, which among most Plains tribes are in the hands of tribal bodies or societies. They had charge of the moving of the camp-circle and of locating it. If a man disapproved of their selection, or pitched his tent elsewhere than they directed, they overturned it, and perhaps destroyed his property or killed his horses. If buffalo were seen and others than themselves went ahead and killed them, these two companies cut both the meat and the skin of such game into small pieces.

The Fly-Dance.

The fly-dance (nouba"w"), the first of the dances, seems to have been regarded in some ways as preliminary to the series, rather than part of it, somewhat like the Arapaho kit-fox and star dances. The dancers were called noubän ("flies"). They were young men, sometimes described as boys. Apparently they were of an age where many or all of them were still unmarried, for no mention of their wives participating in the ceremony is made. The duration of the dance is not quite sure. It is said, like all the other ceremonies, to have continued four days; but another informant gave one day as the length of the cerĕmony. It is not clear whether or not a lodge was erected for the ceremony. In any case, however, the dance was performed outside of the camp-circle. A prominent feature seems to have been the food cooked by the relatives of the young dancers, and brought to the dancing-place. In distinction from what occurred in the other dances, "grandfathers" were secured very easily for this cĕremony, which goes to show the light regard in which it was held by the elder men. The old men of the tribe are said to have gone out to the dancing-place, and, on being selected by groups of dancers as "grandfathers," to have accepted at once.

The dancing went on during the day. The dancers were practically naked; and their entire body, as customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre ceremonies, was painted over. A common style of painting, or perhaps the characteristic one of the dance, was red, with a white stripe on the face and another on the belly. The pledger of the dance (yenouhuxtj[i]; Arapaho, yanahut[i]) was painted yellow, with corresponding black stripes. After the

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NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

[293] [534]

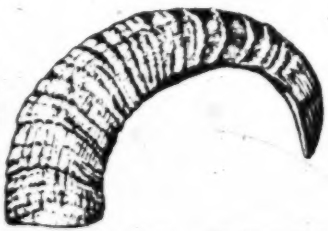

Fig. 32 (50–1839). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

[293]

Fig. 33 (50–1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

[297] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.

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NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Fig. 33 shows one of the small quill-wrapped hoops carried on a stick in the fly-dance. It is about three inches across, and lacks the feathers once attached to it. The hoop is not continuous, but consists of four slightly curved sticks. Each of these is wound with yellow quills, and in the middle with black (really dark-brown) fibres. The quill-wrapping encloses a sinew strand, which passes from one stick to the other, holding them together into a flexible, somewhat four-cornered hoop. At each of the four dark marks an eagle-plume was formerly attached, and in addition an eagle-feather (specimen Museum No. 50 1936b) was hung from the hoop. This hoop was made, for the man from whom it was obtained, at the time he took part in the fly-dance.

796 293

The Crazy-Dance.

The second ceremony, the crazy-dance, corresponds pretty closely to the Arapaho crazy-dance. When it was summer, and the time came to make the ceremony in fulfilment of the pledge previously given, the different bands of the tribe gathered in a single camp-circle. Certain men, leaving this camp, then went out to select a suitable site for the dance. When they had found this, the camp started for the place, while they made piles of buffalo-chips in a circle, indicating the place for the camp. The company about to make the ceremony gathered at night, and, taking a pipe of black stone, went stealthily to the tent of an old man whom they had selected to put up the lodge (that is, direct the ceremony) for them. They entered his tent while he was sleeping, woke him, and handed him the pipe. When he signified his acceptance by taking it, they kissed him in thanks, and made him presents. After he had smoked the pipe, he told them to obtain "grandfathers," which they did.

796

When the preparations had begun to be made, crows and owls were killed by the dancers, because they used their feathers. The dancers' regalia consisted of anklets of badger-skin and of quill-embroidered leglets, to both of which four crow-feathers and buffalo-fetlocks, or antelope-hoofs, were attached as ornaments and rattles. Around the head they wore a narrow strip of skin embroidered with quill-work, to which an owl's head was tied on one side. Around their necks hung another quill-embroidered thong, at the end of which was a whistle of eagle-wing bone. A buffalo robe painted red was worn. A round hole was cut in this through which the head was put, so that the dancers did not have to hold the garment in place. The piece cut out for the head was not entirely detached, but left hanging down the back. Two long streamers of skin hung down the back

[825] [292] [534]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

from this part of the robe. At the end of each of these, a bunch of owl-feathers, or rather a piece of owl-skin, was attached. The dancers carried bows, to each end of which seven crow-feathers were tied. Down was fastened to the bowstring at several places. At the handle of the bow a strip of bear-skin, owl-feathers, and some sage were fastened with a buck-skin thong. Four arrows accompanied each bow. One had a metal point, which subsequently was made more effective by medicine. The three other arrows were blunt, or had wooden points that had been chewed soft so as to be harmless.

The pledger, and three other men called "brothers" (hinähäbyiitou), who sat apart from the other dancers in the lodge and acted somewhat differently on certain occasions, had bows that were unornamented, except for the down on the string. These four men wore their robes turned so that the hair was outside, whereas the other dancers wore the dressed side out.

All the dancers were painted entirely red. Their hair was daubed with white paint. They stopped the left ear with a mushroom, such as was used for tinder, and put paint (apparently white) over the ear and the entire left side of the face.

Four young men who would be good workers were selected to be the assistants or servants (atsaan) of this company. They brought wood and water, and performed other services.

The lodge for this dance is described as having been made of travois or tent poles about which tent-skins were drawn. It was open to the east. There was a fire about in the centre. Facing the opening of the lodge was a small partial enclosure or screen constructed on dog-travois. In this were the pledger and his three companions, the "brothers." The dancers are said to have occupied the northern half of the wall in the dancing-lodge; the "grandfathers," behind whom sat the dancers' wives, the southern half. As among the Arapaho, the dancers were divided into two sections; the tall men toward the rear and the short men toward the front, of the lodge. These two divisions competed against each other in the races to follow. The dancers' bows were stood up in the ground in a row just beyond the fire.

During the four days of the dance, the dancers, every morning before sunrise, went to their "grandfathers" to be painted. Apparently they went to their "grandfathers'" tents, and not to the dancing-lodge, for this purpose. The dancers' wives went with them. They were naked, and were painted too. No one but the "grandfather" looked at them. Before being painted, the dancers made incense of sage-leaves on burning charcoal. They also rubbed their bodies with fragrant fir or balsam leaves Crushed and mixed with fat.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

crushed and mixed with fat. When the painting was completed, food from the young men's parents was brought to the old men. The old men also presented their "grandsons" with food. The food was then eaten. During the day the dancers and their "grandfathers" were in the dancing-lodge. In connection with the beginning of the dancing, a badger-skin was used. This was entirely wrapped, except at the head, in a flat rope of rawhide, half of which (one side?) was painted red, the other half black. This skin lay on the ground before the pledger of the dance, in or in front of his small enclosure, with the head toward the east. Glowing charcoal was laid before the row of bows, and sweet-grass (niasō; Arapaho, nioxᵘ) was put on the coals to incense the bows. The pledger, rising, took the badger-skin, and, holding it with the head pointing forward, walked slowly around the inside of the lodge, and then to the smouldering incense, over which he made four passes with the skin; then returning to his enclosure, he laid the badger-skin on the ground. Taking out a stick tied in with the skin, he struck the skin as hard as he could. At this, a singer at the middle of the back or western end of the lodge — who held a stick as high as a man, wrapped with buckskin, and with buffalo or antelope hoofs hanging along its length — struck the end on the ground, thus beginning the rattling that accompanied the singing. The old men began to sing, while the dancers simultaneously blew their whistles, and cried "Yaa!" The old men stood up and sang, and the dancers went to them, each of them to his "grandfather," usually three or four to one old man. The old men then drilled them, showing them how to dance and how to handle their bows and their robes. It seems that the dancers stood at the opening of the lodge, somewhat on the south. After dancing to four songs, during which they whistled and at the end of each of which they cried "Yaa," they dashed off in a race around a monument that had been erected at some distance to the southeast. If one of the division of tall men returned to the lodge first and thus won the race for his side, the short men filled pipes for the tall men and presented them to them to smoke, and, of course, *vice versâ*.

After the cessation of the dancing, and when it was dark, old men cried out to the people to retire to their tents, the dancers' wives being about to go out with the "grandfathers." As the women went out, the dancers stood in the lodge in a circle, singing loudly and shouting in conclusion. The "grandfathers" went to the north of the camp-circle, where they stood in a row. Their "grand-daughters," that is to say, the dancers' wives, each carrying a pipe, followed them, and stood behind them. They addressed their "grandfathers," praying them to take the pipe and smoke it. After much persuasion, the old man accepted the pipe. Then the woman prayed to him again, asking him to pray in her behalf, that she might be

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 successful and happy in this world, in acquiring wealth and in living a long life. Then the old man pointed the pipe east, south, west, north, and up, lit it, and smoked it. Then wiping it, and dropping the ashes out of it, he held the pipe up toward the sky, and prayed for his "grand-daughter," then laid it on the ground. The woman was naked, except for her robe. She then begged the old man to give her the medicine called tawaanas60 (the Arapaho hâcawaanaxu). It is said that sometimes the old man gave her none, but undoubtedly it was customary for him to give it to her. Only a small piece was used.

After this the women returned to the dancing-lodge, where their husbands were waiting for them. They did not go together, but singly. A boy or young man had been selected to stand outside the door, and watch for the women returning. As a woman came near enough to be recognized, he called into the lodge that she was coming, whereupon the dancers came out. Her husband and all the others kissed her. Her husband [576] kissed the "grandfather" also. One by one the other women came back, and were received in the same way. If the woman had received medicine, she gave half to her husband. He chewed it up, and then rubbed himself over his body with it.

For four nights this appears to have been done. On all but the last night, it is said, that, on the return of the women, they and their husbands left the lodge and returned to their tents to sleep, to be painted again next morning. The last night, after the women and their "grandfathers" had returned, the old men picked out from the row of bows their "grandsons'," and, standing north and south of the fire, danced, holding the bows; their "grandsons" meanwhile dancing with them, but the women sitting in their places.

These observances connected with the giving of medicine by the "grandfathers" to the dancers' wives are found, without essential modification, in the three following dances, as well as in this. It will be seen that they are considerably more developed than the corresponding practices among the Arapaho.[1]

[1] In the Arapaho crazy and dog dances the procedure is not carried quite so far. Dorsey has described almost the same practice as occurring in the Arapaho sun-dance. What takes place on this occasion in the Arapaho crazy and dog dances has been summarized in Vol. XVIII, pp. 193, 200, of the Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History. The following somewhat more precise account is appended for comparison with the Gros Ventre. The "grandfather" and the dancer's wife (who is naked, except, presumably, for a robe) go off. As or before they go it is said aloud, "He gives his wife away." She is given, theoretically, not to her husband's ceremonial "grandfather," but to "the four old men" that play a part in esoteric Arapaho ritual. The woman prays, asking the old man for life. He spits medicine on the ground four times, once for each of the four old men. She lies down before him, stretching her legs and arms, facing him. He asks "the grandfather above" — apparently "our father" — to look, and puts away his desire. Restraining himself, he covers her with a robe, draws her up, and leads her back, pushing her gently before him. When she rejoins her husband, the latter says, "Hahó'u" ("thanks") four times. That this custom of the Arapaho and Gros Ventre is not confined to them, is evident from a well-known passage in Lewis and Clark. [114 171]

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

All that has been described took place for four successive days. While it is not clearly so stated, it seems likely that the four nights on which medicine was given to the dancers' wives constituted the four-days' period of painting and dancing. On the fourth day, after the dancing, certain special spectacular ceremonies were gone through, analogous to those which in all the succeeding dances terminated the ceremony. In this dance, however, a second period of four days, in which the dancers acted in their assumed capacity of being crazy or foolish, followed these spectacular ceremonies of the fourth day. 796

On this fourth day, two prominent chiefs, noted for their success in war, were selected. They held bared knives, and two tent-poles were brought to them. Each of them recounted four of his most distinguished coups. They then cut up the tent-poles into small pieces, and piled them up at the fireplace of the lodge and set them on fire. The flames blazed up high, while the dancers stood north and south of the fire with their "grandfathers" and danced. The fire was kept up and tended so that all the wood would be simultaneously consumed. The dancers' relatives held them by the hair or body, wherever they could seize them, while the dancers stood like horses trying to break loose, and blew their whistles. Each tried to be the first to rush into the fire. They seem to have moved toward the fire four times without entering it. The fourth time, at a signal, they were released, and rushed into the fire, dancing and stamping it with their bare feet until they had put it out. Medicine was put on the skin, and no one is said to have been burned; but men have fainted in the fire. One informant, who said that he had been the first to jump into the fire, stated that the soles of his feet became very hot, but that his skin was not burned. [554] [589]

After the fire had been put out, the dancers went to their "grandfathers," who prayed over their bows, put medicine on them, and gave them to the young men. The old men then sang and the dancers marched around in a circle for four songs. At the end of the last song, they ran out of the lodge, racing to a monument, which had been erected by the young men of other companies, at some distance to the southeast, and back again to the lodge. As they returned, each passed between two men standing near the entrance of the lodge, to whom he gave his bow as he ran between them. One of these two men was the tallest man that could be secured; the other was as short as possible. One of them took the bows of the tall division of dancers; the other, of the short division. It is said that these two men received bows until they had a large armful, but that they never made a mistake in taking a bow from a man of the other division. It appears, however, that the racers carried their bows in their right or left 796 526

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as heicâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which teetsâatcei is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts.

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance.

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, toe-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (80-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (80-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

293
796
191

More regalia of the crazy-dance than of any other ceremony were obtained for the Museum; but not a single set secured is complete. The Arapaho do not keep their crazy-dance bows after the ceremony, so that, under the present much more complete disappearance of Gros Ventre regalia, the preservation of a bow (see Plate XII) is very fortunate, though it lacks string, arrows, the sage for the handle, and the buckskin thong for wrapping the handle. The remaining ornaments of the bow have been re-attached to it. None of the peculiar crazy-dance robes or capes seem to be any longer in existence. Descriptions and drawings by the Indians show

[293]

Fig. 36.

Fig. 37.

Fig. 36 (50-1884 c.). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 37 cm.
Fig. 37 (50-1884 b.). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 25 cm.

that they must have been very similar to those of the Arapaho. The Gros Ventre, however, declare theirs to have been painted entirely red; those of the Arapaho are part red and part white. Two pieces of feathered owl-skin

293
796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouqä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The Dog-Dance.

796 Next after the kit-fox dance is the dog-dance, hotibya"wu. The dancers were called hotibyi ("dogs"). What has been said about the general course of the kit-fox ceremony applies also to this. On the last day, the dancers danced before the tents of several prominent men of the tribe for gifts. Then, going ahead of the route which the camp would take, they spread out this property and waited. When the camp arrived, a stick with rattles attached, similar to that used for the same purpose in the crazy-dance, was struck on the ground by one of the old men, whereupon the singing commenced, and the dancers danced four times. At the end of the fourth song, they raced, during which time, if not before, the people of the camp, it appears, seized the property.

The dog-dance is said to have been given by a dog. A long-haired dog was left behind when the camp left. An old man going into the hills to acquire supernatural power saw the dog following the trail, and, wondering, went to see, and pitied him. He went to sleep by him; and the dog, knowing the old man's pity for him, pitied him, and, appearing to him in a dream, said he would give him a dance, the dog-dance. He especially described to him the highest degree of the dance, the tsööyanchi, which seems to be a representation of himself.

796 292 The dancers wore a strip of skin or red cloth on which four round figures were embroidered in quills, and which passed over one shoulder and under the other, the lower end dragging on the ground. At this end there was a hole, through which, in time of war, a stick was stuck. The wearers then did not flee, even if to remain resulted in their being killed. These scarfs appear to have resembled closely the scarfs worn by the Arapaho dancers of the second and third degree in the same ceremony. They were called naa"tsöiya". In addition the dancers wore bunchy head-dresses of owl feathers and of two eagle-feathers. They also carried rattles of a stick on which hoofs were hung.

796 554 292 Two men were of higher degree, that is to say, honored on account of bravery. These were the "shaggy dogs," and were called tsööyanchin, the dialectic equivalent of the Arapaho teiiyanchina". Among the Arapaho, however, there is only one dancer of this highest degree. As among the Arapaho, these men did not get up, or take part in the dancing, unless they were struck, or driven to it. They wore a shirt all over which circles were fastened in *appliqué*. To the centre of each circle, feathers were attached. On their heads they had owl-feather bunches like those of the rank and file of the dancers; and around their necks were long strings of bear-claws.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,— a row of small hoofs attached to a stick, — except that the rattles of the ts88yanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 As in the other ceremonies, the dancers were painted over the entire
302 body. It does not seem that the long-continued painting of the Arapaho
562 dog-dance, in connection with which the relationship between the dancers' wives and "grandfathers" found its chief expression in this tribe, existed among the Gros Ventre. The women, however, took considerable part in the ceremony as in the others, being painted with their husbands, sitting in the lodge and singing, and at times putting on their regalia; whereupon the men took hold of the ends of the regalia, and their wives led them about.

796 The complete disintegration and disuse of the old ceremonial life of
178 the Gros Ventre is shown by the fact that not a single dog-dance object belonging to an ordinary dancer has been collected. It is therefore the more fortunate that the Museum has been able to complete, through Dr. Clark Wissler, a valuable set of the regalia of the highest degree of this dance. This unique group of specimens is shown in Figs. 38, 39, and 40, and Plate XIII.

796 The coat (Fig. 38) is in shape an ordinary deer-skin shirt. At the neck
292 is an edging of red flannel. On the upper arms are two short, transverse bars of white quill-embroidery, the quills laid on in diagonal zigzag stitch. At each of the sides, at the bottom of the shirt, hang two long, pointed strips, as customary on men's shirts, — the legs of the animal decoratively used. Under the armpits are similar shorter flaps. The two sides of the shirt are open from the bottom to under the arms. These open edges, the hanging strips, the lower border, and the ends of the sleeves, are ornamented with a fringe about an inch long. The lower portion of the shirt for a width of about half a foot, and the hanging strips, are painted yellow. All the remainder of the shirt has been stained brown, apparently over yellow paint. On the two sides there are in this brown area a total of 225 yellow circles about an inch and a half in diameter, which have not been painted over with the brown stain. Each of these circles is edged by white quill-work, and from its centre hangs a mutilated crow-feather by a thong. The edging of the circles is produced by using single quills as threads in an in-and-out rotary stitch. The crow-feathers have the quill broken, in from one to four places, without being severed. The vanes are for the most part considerably disarranged, as if intentionally. At the lower end the feathers are cut off square and the quill is flattened by cutting on two sides, as if to get rid of the lowest part of the vane. The quill is cut in this way so far from its natural base that it is entirely solid. The feathers are simply wrapped against a thong with sinew. The end of the thong projects a little beyond the sinew. The thongs on the outside of the skin average half an inch in length, and are painted yellow. Each passes through a hole in the centre of a yellow circle. Behind this, that is, on the inner side of the shirt, it is

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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292 knotted on itself sufficiently to keep from being pulled out. Of the circles, forty-two are on one sleeve, forty-three on the other; on the two sides of the shirt there are sixty-three and seventy-seven, in seven and eight rows of from six to thirteen.

The owl-feather head-dress of this set of regalia (see Plate XIII) contains

Fig. 38 (50–4277). Dog-dance Shirt, Highest Degree. Length, 70 cm.

several hundred feathers mounted on a skin cap. This cap is of heavy skin, circular, somewhat over a foot in diameter, and surrounded by a short fringe. The inner ends of this fringe are wound with white porcupine-quills. The upper surface of the cap is painted yellow, the under side is unpainted. Two thongs hanging from the edge of the cap serve to tie it.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901),1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The feathers on this cap all have the quill split nearly as far down as the vanes extend. They are attached to one or perhaps more thongs painted yellow, which form a continuous, or at least virtually continuous, expanding spiral of six or more turns from the centre of the head-dress to about one-third of the distance to the edge. This thong gathers several feathers, then passes for a short stitch through the skin of the cap, not penetrating to the under side. Thus it continues its spiral course, lying for almost its whole length on the upper surface of the cap. The feathers are all attached to it in one fundamental manner, the thong passing through a loop formed by the turning-back on itself of the cut-down end of the quill. But three variations

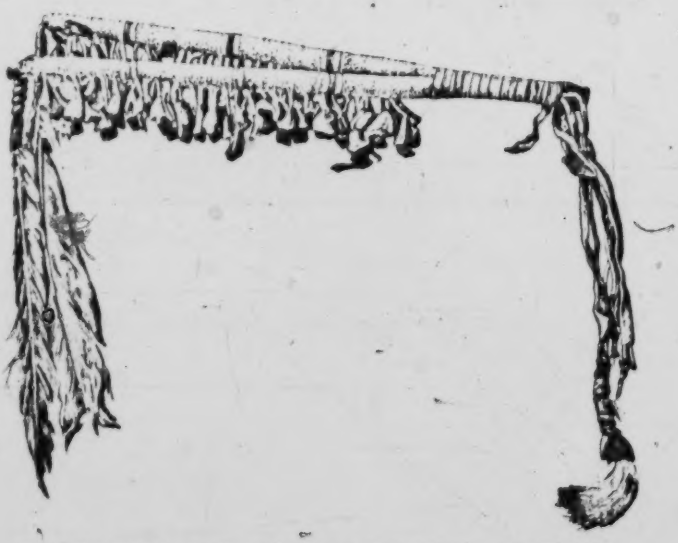

Fig. 39 (50-1789 a). Rattle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 47 cm.

of this method appear. Sometimes the end of the quill is turned into itself. In other cases the end is bent forward in the same way, but laid over the outside of the quill, and lashed to it with wrapping of sinew. This sinew wrapping, however, is used also with the first method, though it is not absolutely essential. In other cases the end of the quill is bent backward on itself so that its inner side is out, and fastened in the same way. When this is done, a smaller feather has its quill inserted in the sinew wrapping holding the loop of the main feather. Why the quill should be looped backward whenever a small feather is included, and only then, is not clear. The area encircled by the thong with its hundreds of feathers strung on it is only a

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

small part of the surface of the cap. The feathers are long enough to extend beyond the outer edge of the skin as they fall. Two special, slightly longer wing-feathers of the same species of owl are separately attached near the top of the head-dress, on opposite sides, like horns, by thongs passing through the skin where their ends hang loose. These evidently correspond to the two eagle-feathers once mentioned as occurring on the owl-feather caps of the rank and file of the dog-dancers.

The rattle of the Gros Ventre ts88yanchin (Fig. 39) is very similar to the Arapaho dog-dance rattles, its most prominent peculiarity being that it is

Fig. 40 (50-1789 b). Whistle of Dog-dancer, Highest Degree. Length, 60 cm.

bifurcated. Two sticks appear to have been joined at the handle so as to spread slightly. The sticks, where separate, are incased in skin painted yellow; at the handle they are wrapped together with a flat thong. Across each stick pass three stripes of quill-embroidery, each consisting of a red row of quills bordered on each side by white. At the end of each fork hangs an eagle-wing feather, the base of its quill covered with red cloth. Along the lower side of each fork are the small hoofs that rattle. There are on each stick about thirty-three pairs of these hoofs. Each pair is attached to a yellow-painted thong passing through the skin casing of the stick where this is joined in a sinew-sewn seam. The ends of these thongs pass through holes at the upper ends of the irregularly pyramidal-shaped hoofs. Inside the hoof, the end of thong is knotted around the middle of a little strip of red flannel or blanketing. This prevents the thong from being pulled out

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 534 of the hoof; at the same time the two ends of the red cloth hang out of the hoof, giving a decorative effect. At the end of the handle the skin casing of the sticks emerges from under its thong wrapping, and hangs down free about two-thirds of a foot. Part of this loose strip is cut out, so as to make of the remainder a loop to pass over the wrist. In this cut-out portion are four narrow thongs,—two wound with white quills, two with red. The end of this loop-strip is fringed and quill-wound; a deer-tail, its base covered with red cloth, hangs from it.

The whistle (Fig. 40) is of wood, in which it differs from all Arapaho bäyaa^{n}wu whistles, painted yellow, and two feet long. The end farthest from the mouth is cut off diagonally almost to a point. Here is hung an eagle-feather, its base covered with red cloth. Along the middle portion of the whistle are laid two strips of red cloth, held by two sinew bands and by a long doubly wound thong wrapped with white porcupine-quills. These red strips are not quite wide enough to entirely cover the whistle. The two ends of both pieces hang free. Where the cloth ends on the whistle, toward the mouthpiece, two magpie-feathers are laid along the wood, nearly to the end, their bases being held by the last wrappings of the cloth. One or more small yellowhammer-feathers are also held by these wrappings.

[822] Another dog-dance whistle secured (specimen Museum No. 50–1899) was said also to have been used by a tsööyanehi. Its only essential difference from the piece just described is that it is painted red, whereas the previous one, like all the regalia which it accompanied, was yellow. The present whistle is one-third shorter, has the yellowhammer-feathers displayed more conspicuously, has a plain instead of a quill-wound thong to hold the red cloth, lacks the red cloth at the base of its end eagle-feather, and has this feather painted over red. All these differences, except that of general color, are either insignificant or matters of proportion.

The Nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}.

796 The fifth dance is known, nearly as among the Arapaho, by the name of nanā^{n}naha^{n}w^{u}. The exact meaning of this term is not known. It is generally translated "soldiers' lodge." The dancers are called nanā^{n}nähä^{n}ts, or hiityaäa^{n}sütś, which means "those who have war-sticks," the tcuäa^{n}sö or Arapaho tceñox. The lodge was made, as for the other dances, of the two largest tents available, in the middle of the camp-circle, with the door towards the east. The dancers obtained medicine from their "grandfathers" through their wives at night, were painted in the morning, and danced during the day, or, according to another account, at night. In the songs of this dance the buffalo were called, and it is said that the ceremony always resulted

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Bitahaⁿwᵘ.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 but none are living who have taken part in it. The meaning of the term, as among the Arapaho, is unknown. One informant gave the etymology "drum-dance" (from biitaxäänaⁿ, "drum"). The dancers were called biitaxäänen. As in the preceding ceremonies, a man took part in this dance accompanied by his wife, or, if it happened to be held while he was at war, his wife took part as if he were present. Nothing is known as to the conduct of the ceremony nor as to the regalia, except that the dancers, or certain of them, carried crooked sticks wrapped with white fur. The dancers were [302] painted over their body with dots resembling hail. The dance is looked upon as having been very dangerous, as a mistake in painting or in other observances would result in death from the thunder.

It is not impossible, that, if the present Arapaho series of dances represents a more original order of arrangement than the Gros Ventre, in the development of the Gros Ventre series the biitahaⁿwᵘ was displaced by the kit-fox dance, which grew in importance from a dance of the youngest men to one of older men. This would account for the use of crooked fur-wrapped sticks in the Gros Ventre kit-fox dance as well as in their biitahaⁿwᵘ. If this was the course of events, it does not follow that the biitahaⁿwᵘ became the sixth dance of the series. It may simply have been displaced, and fallen into disuse. Lack of knowledge of the proper conduct of the ceremony would be sufficient to make the Indians afraid to undertake it. It has been stated that no informants could be found who professed to know the place of this dance in the series, and it is possible that its dangerous qualities were not due to its greater sacredness through being the dance of the oldest men, but to such lack of knowledge. On the whole it is very difficult to see how such differentiations in the order of dances as exist in the Arapaho and Gros Ventre schemes of ceremonial organization may have taken place.

The Women's Dance.

[171] The women's dance — called benuxteⁿwᵘ, the dancers being named 796 benuxteiiçäⁿ[1] — resembles the Arapaho women's dance quite closely. The 292 dancers had on their ordinary clothing, but wore belts to which four buffalo-tails were fastened, and head-dresses which fell down the back of their heads and from which horns rose. These head-dresses are said to have been covered with feathers; but it seems possible that this statement refers only to the dancers of certain degrees, as among the Arapaho only the dancer of highest [171] degree wears such a feather-covered head-dress. Four of the dancers wore no horned head-dress, but "war-bonnets." These may have been equivalent

[1] The Gros Ventre declare that they do not know the significance of the word element benux-tc-.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

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As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinaa^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 152.

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Entering the tent very slowly while the people are singing, he stops four times at the end of a song, and motions with the skin. The fourth time he throws the skin among the singers, who shout, and seize it, spread it out, and commence to beat it with their sticks and sing the songs of the night. They go through all the sun-dance songs this night. In the morning the entire camp breaks, and moves to another place not far away. That night the entire ritual is gone through again, and this is repeated altogether four times. The pledger provides food for the singers in the prairie-chicken lodge. The singing in this lodge is called "singing-for-it" (niinibyaa"tou).

After the four nights of the prairie-chicken lodge, seven chiefs are selected to go out as scouts looking for trees to be used in the dancing-lodge. The trees should be straight, and the largest one, for the middle, forked. These men scout for the trees as they would for an enemy. They are painted as [302] if for war, and wear what they would in war. When the people in the camp see them returning, they rush to the centre of the camp-circle, carrying hand-drums. The scouts go circling and dancing, and crying like wolves or coyotes, whereupon the people cry out that the scouts are returning successfully. Those who bear drums stand in a line abreast; in front of them is a pile of rocks. The scouts, still circling, and crying each time they face the direction from which they have come, approach nearer and nearer. Then one by one they circle about the heap of stones, and, stepping forward a short distance, stop and stand abreast, facing the drums. A prominent man who has been selected steps out from the people and recounts his most distinguished coups. Thereupon he goes up to one of the seven scouts, and leads his horse forward by the bridle. The scout then recounts four coups. Then the chief leads forward the horse of the next scout, who also tells four stories; and so on until all seven have spoken. Thereupon the first of the seven addresses the people, and reports that they have found good-looking people and a chief, meaning the smaller poles and the central fork of the lodge.

Some time after this the people go to the trees. The young men especially dress and paint themselves as well as they can, and ride their best horses. They go first to what is to be the central pole. One man dismounts, and places coals and fir-needle incense on the ground on four sides of the tree, thus incensing it. Then all dismount, and, standing about and having shouted, begin to sing. After they have sung, two men stand by the tree and swing axes four times, as if to strike it. Then they begin to chop it. When the tree begins to lean, every one shoots at it; and when it falls, all dash up to it and strip it of branches and leaves. Thereupon they scatter in the timber, cutting the smaller forks and poles, and as each one of these falls it is shot. There are many small parties getting these smaller forks,

l: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and there is much noise in the timber. Many young men tie ropes to the centre post, and, riding their horses, drag the tree to the camp, while others follow shooting it. The smaller trees are brought back in the same way. 796

While the people are bringing the trees, four distinguished warriors have been selected to go out on the prairie to kill a buffalo-bull, which one of them is to kill with a single shot. Theoretically the four men have only a single bow and arrow, or a gun with only one cartridge. As soon as they see the buffalo, they stop, and each of them recounts coups. Then they attack the bull. It is said that, if the designated man kills the bull with one shot, the coups which he has counted have been told truly; but, if more than one shot is required, he has lied. It is said that they are almost always successful. They skin the bull, and leave the body.

Meanwhile the old people of the tribe have been digging the holes in which the upright forks of the lodge are to be set. When the young people return with the trees, and the four chiefs with the buffalo-skin, these holes are completed. Two prominent men are selected, and, after each has counted four coups, they cut the fresh hide into thongs. These are used to tie the horizontal rafter-poles of the lodge fast to the upright forks in which they rest. The two men who have done the cutting then give away property to old people.

After this the members of the age-companies gather. In more recent times the war-dancers assemble on one side of the lodge, the star-dancers on the other. They carry tent-poles, which are tied in pairs by a short rope near the top. Each man holds one pole of such a pair. The poles are used to lift the centre fork, which will rest on the thongs connecting the tops of the poles. The pledger now goes around the lodge very slowly, painting the poles as they lie on the ground, rubbing each with the palm of his hand in four places. It is probable that, as among the Arapaho, he does not go alone in this painting. The people who are to raise the centre fork are standing where the outer wall of the lodge will later be, singing. At the end of the song they shout. Then they proceed to the centre pole, which is lying with the top toward the east. The pledger and the old men stand in a row at the eastern end. The old man keeping the sacred flat pipe incenses this four times, and sings the songs that relate to the pipe. The hole into which the butt of the tree is to be set is incensed with sweet-grass. Then the keeper of the pipe touches the head of the tree with his pipe, and motions to it four times. The motion of the pipe is supposed to raise the tree. The joined poles have been placed under the tree, and other people support it with their hands. Four times the tree moves under their efforts and the influence of the pipe. The fourth time, the keeper of the pipe says "Now," and the tree is entirely raised up, and set in its hole. As soon as the centre

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 fork is upright, the young men all compete, trying to raise their rafters into position in the centre fork and in a fork at the periphery, before the others. After the tree has been raised, or possibly before, the young men go out, apparently by age-companies, to cut willows to form the walls of the lodge. More recently the star-dancers and war-dancers have done this, those of each company taking the wives of the men of the other company on their horses behind them. As they go, they shoot up in the air, and when in the timber each man cuts a willow-branch. They return holding the branches and singing, ride around the lodge, and then deposit them. After the outside rafter-poles of the lodge have been tied fast in the forks, these branches are leaned in position, forming an enclosure of the lodge.

The centre fork has a buffalo-tail attached to it. A bundle of brush, called a "nest," is also fastened in the fork. A lightning symbol is made on the western side of the tree down to the ground. Inside the lodge a low screen, said to be about waist high, is erected at the western end, opposite the entrance. Behind this is the pledger of the dance. In front of the screen is a painted buffalo-skull. Two sticks of cherry-wood, one red and one black, stand on each side of the skull. A wheel or ceremonial hoop made of a stick bent in a circle, wrapped with skin, and with feathers attached, is hung on one of these sticks. Just as clothing is hung at the ends of the horizontal rafters of the lodge, or possibly on the centre fork itself, as an offering to the sun, objects are said to be hung on this brush screen at the western end of the lodge.

[771] Apparently the general course of the main portion of the dance, which follows the erection of the lodge, is similar to that of the Arapaho sun-dance, though there are certain features entirely without parallel among the Arapaho. The pledger and the other dancers neither eat nor drink during the ceremony. Women join in the fasting, but do not dance. The dancers stand whistling, and looking up at the "nest" in the tree.

796 The self-torture characterizing the sun-dance among most tribes is found
304 with the Gros Ventre in its usual form. Four knotted thongs hang from the
785 centre fork. Two sticks are passed under the skin of the dancers' breasts, one on each side, to which the thongs are fastened. The dancers try to tear the sticks out of their skin. Some whose skin is tough do not succeed. In that case a medicine-man comes to them and makes them unconscious of pain, so that they break loose easily. When they have fallen, he restores them to consciousness. One after the other, the dancers go through this ordeal. While the dancers are thus tied to the tree, they move back and forth, apparently dancing. This is called niina^{n}tsôia^{n}. Some dancers also fasten shields in a similar way to the skin of their back, and pull these out. Others are attached by the breast to a post located outside of the dancing-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory).

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and headrest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called tsöötaxwuhuu ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops. This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quantity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

aho sun-dance paint. Usually the Arapaho paint only two diamonds on each limb; but four have been seen on the northern Arapaho pledger, as in this picture. Another drawing repeats this painting, and adds a headband, anklets, and wristlets apparently corresponding to the sage ornaments of the Arapaho. In a third drawing a dancer is painted with lightning symbols down his legs and arms. 796 532

The Gros Ventre and Arapaho sun-dances differ about as much as their respective age-company ceremonies. The principal discrepancies seem to be the following. 796 171

The Gros Ventre accumulation of buffalo-tongues by the pledger after the making of the vow and before the ceremony. This feature is found among the Blackfoot, but not among the Arapaho.

The prairie-chicken lodge with its four-nights' singing apparently corresponds somewhat to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; but its daily removal, accompanied by the camp-circle, is not found among the Arapaho. The prairie-chicken singing recalls a feature in the Arapaho hinanaha^{n}wu, the fifth of the age-ceremonies.

According to the account obtained, the public ceremonies relating to the erection of the lodge do not take place until after the four-nights' singing in the prairie-chicken tent. Among the Arapaho, they occur while the rabbit-tent is in use, and are in large part connected with the rites within it. It is also not clear how long a time these public ceremonies — the scouting for the trees, the bringing-in of the centre pole, the killing of the buffalo, and the painting of the lodge-poles and erection of the lodge — occupy. They are described as if they occurred in the space of a day. This would not be impossible; but it is likely that this impression is due to indefiniteness of narration. It is, however, distinctly stated that the buffalo is shot while the people are bringing in the centre pole. Among the Arapaho, the centre pole is brought in two days after the buffalo has been shot. The skin of this buffalo is kept entire and taken into the dancing-lodge; by the Gros Ventre it is cut into thongs for fastening the lodge-beams to the upright forks. [114]

The "altars" of the two ceremonies cannot be definitely compared, owing to the indefiniteness of information from the Gros Ventre. The screen corresponds to the seven small trees of the Arapaho; the skull and the wheel on the stick are common to the two ceremonies; the red and the black upright stick have no Arapaho equivalents. The Arapaho trench, red and black logs, seven red and seven black sticks, seven wickets, and two sods with bushes, have not been mentioned among the Gros Ventre.

The miraculous raising of the centre pole does not seem to exist among the Arapaho.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 171 The Gros Ventre also introduce into the ceremony a thunder symbolism that the Arapaho lack, or have in a much less developed form. The lightning symbol on the centre pole, from which water can be drawn, and the power of the thunder to strike with lightning any dancer who drinks other water than this, evidence this.

Another element special to the Gros Ventre is the introduction of ceremonies relating to war, such as the dramatic performances and the seeing of the approach of the enemy by the pledger.

Features introducing miraculous and sometimes purely personal supernatural powers are apparently quite lacking from the Arapaho ceremony. Among the Gros Ventre there are the raising of the centre pole, the production of water from the centre pole with the crow, the clairvoyance of the pledger as regards the enemy, and the visions of some of the dancers.

In summary, the exact duration and sequence of all events in the Gros Ventre ceremony are not yet clear; the preliminary prairie-chicken tent does not correspond very closely to the Arapaho rabbit-tent; and the connection of the ceremony with the thunder, the introduction of warlike elements, and that of miraculous or personal features, are peculiar, or nearly so, to the Gros Ventre as compared with the Arapaho.

MODERN CEREMONIAL OBJECTS.

778 171 The recent ceremonial objects of the Gros Ventre are somewhat different from those of the Arapaho. The Arapaho were deeply affected by the ghost-dance movement, more, it is said, than any other tribe; and many of their modern religious regalia have a distinct character of their own. [668 177] The Gros Ventre received the ghost-dance from the Arapaho, but it seems to have taken little hold of them. The only distinctive ghost-dance objects seen or obtained were two small hoops and a few balls, all of which resemble Arapaho types. 177 The chief modern dance-ceremony of the Gros Ventre, the only one performed at present, is the grass or war dance obtained from the Sioux, and evidently a modification of the widespread 778 796 Omaha dance upon which the Arapaho crow-dance is also based. This dance has in recent years been still further modified, until its character now is very similar to that of the crow-dance. [178] The regalia used in this dance at present are very individual, usually crude, and almost always stylistically degenerate. The delicate character and distinct style of the majority of modern Arapaho dance-objects are lacking.

171 778 237 The treatment of feathers in such objects is quite different among the Gros Ventre and Arapaho. The Gros Ventre rarely ornament their feathers

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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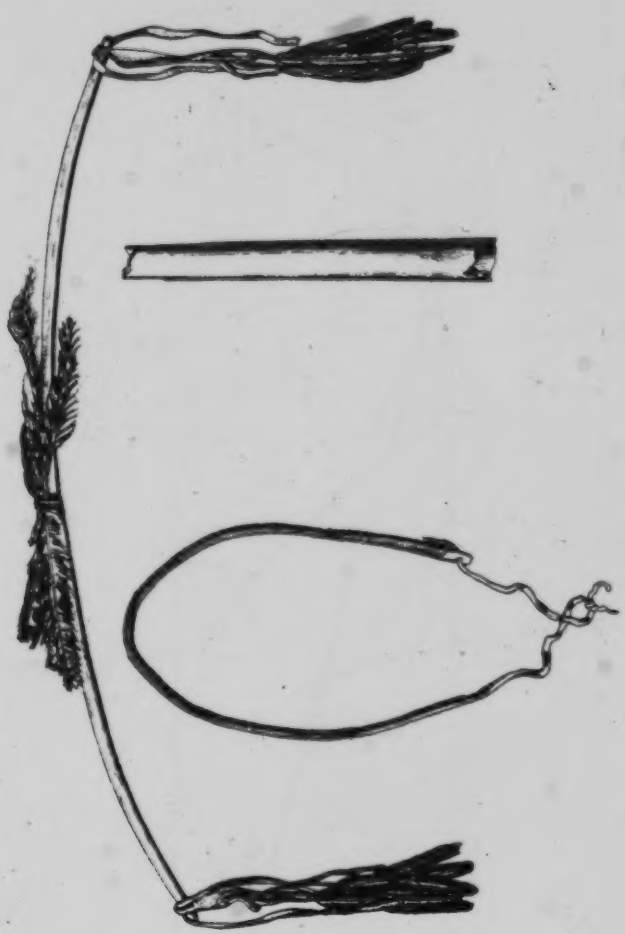

Crazy-Dance Bow and Paraphernalia.

Anthrop. Pap. A. M. N. H.

[End Plate 5]

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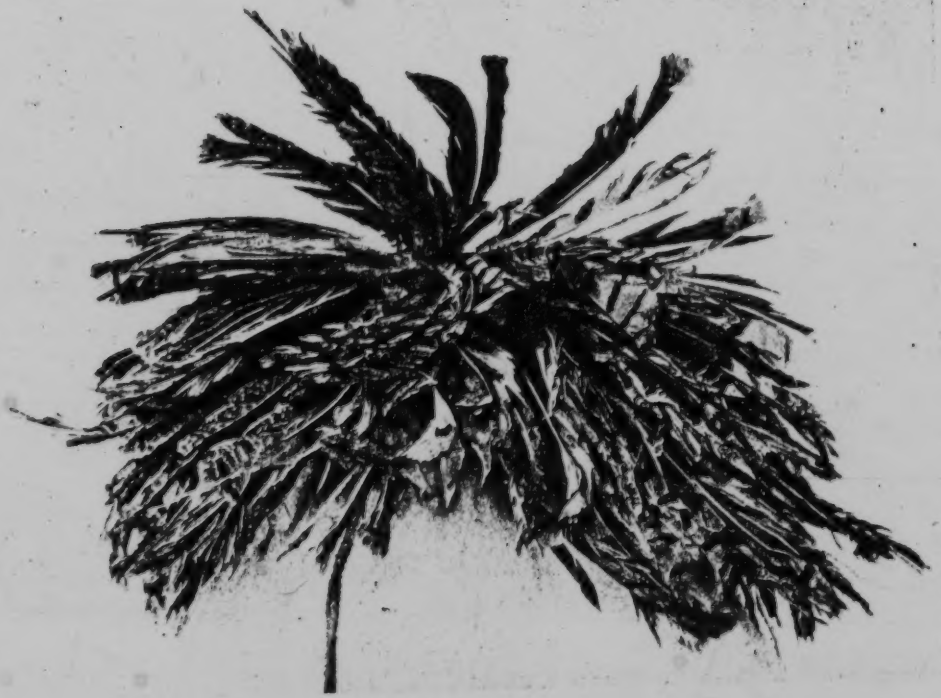
1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[End Plate 6]



Head-Dress for the Dog-Dance.

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very much increased. White Eagle governed the people very wisely and he governed until he died."

643 It was The Boy's impression that following White Eagle, the chief of the whole tribe was no longer formally selected and simply attained his position through gradual recognition of his merits.[9] Sits Like A Woman succeeded White Eagle and was tribal chief in the first decades of the 19th century. He was followed by his son of the same name who was a signer of the 1855 treaty, and was still recognized as tribal head when he died suddenly about 1870. Coming Daylight claimed that this Sits Like a Woman II was certainly the greatest chief of her time and that, when he died, people were forbidden to light their camp fires as a sign of mourning. During the subsequent period Lame Bull was outstanding among the leading men, but he witnessed the dissolution of the [657] band system and the camp circle. The Fort Belknap Reservation had been set up in 1873, encompassing much more territory than at present, and the first houses were built in 1882.

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In spite of the fact that a tribal chief was recognized, band autonomy was apparently preserved. The ceremonial organization cut across band organization, however, and band autonomy was relinquished at the times during which the Sacred Dances were held. The movements and activities of the tribe as a whole were then in the hands of the company to which the vower of a particular Dance belonged.[10]

The Companies

561 Kroeber notes that "men of the tribe of age to make any one ceremony were not all in one society or company but in several, the total number of companies being three or four times as great as the number of ceremonies. Each company had a name which it

[9] So far as it goes, this would seem to confirm O. Lewis' interpretation, pp. 42–43, that the earlier Hudson's Bay Company policy on the northern plains reinforced tribal chieftaincy, but that with the development of competition in the fur trade, authority was weakened.

[10] For a discussion of the Sacred Dances, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 239–68. Other details are given in Cooper, Ms. 1949. The following discussion is concerned only with the composition of the ceremonial organization so far as it can be reconstructed.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

ties of the larger society which the company had joined. Meanwhile another group was meeting informally before it was admitted into one or other of the Societies. Since the Stars and Wolf-men were approximately even in number, there probably was a regular alternation. According to reasonable estimate, the Potbellies joined the Stars about 1840; the next group of young men would then have joined the Wolves, say in 1843 or 1844; the following company joining the Stars in about 1849–50.

If the Sacred Dances, except the Sacrifice Dance, were gone through in order, there would thus be several companies each year whose members were eligible to vow any one of the Dances, and our informants were all under the impression that one or more of the Dances was given each summer. It seems quite clear that the Law Enforcer Dance was vowed only by the older levels of the active warriors. After having gone through this rite, these men more or less retired as "old men," and, having "sat on the sage," acquired certain privileges and freedom denied to their fellow tribesmen who had not yet gone through this Dance. These "old men" acted as ceremonial grandfathers, i.e. sponsors and teachers, for others going through the various lodges, but were no longer active as Stars or Wolf-men. They became members of an undifferentiated group of elders, the ranks of their original company having no doubt been drastically thinned out by the time they would have arrived at this status.

If the above interpretation be correct, there would be three age divisions: the "young men," those meeting in companies; the "middle-aged, mature men," whose companies had joined either the Stars or the Wolf-men, and, having gone through the Fly Dance, were eligible to vow the other Dances; the "old men" who had gone through the Law Enforcer's Dance and were no longer active in the Star and Wolf-men societies, except two of their number, one of whom served as announcer in each.

The young men, who together formed the company, being of approximately the same age, were tied together by bonds of friendship and there were apparently not a few pairs of "inseparable friends" in each company. One of our informants, Cora Chandler, indicated that the bonds holding together the members of a company were so intimate that marriage between their children was

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Each society had its distinctive songs which would be used by its component companies in carrying out their police duties during the Sacred Dances. Both had their "begging songs," as well as their marching and dance songs. Everyone in camp would know from the songs which of the societies was performing.

In connection with the distinctive dance of either society was first the preliminary "begging." This meant that the members of the society, dressed in their best and mounted on their finest horses, would select the lodges of prominent men belonging to the opposite society in front of which they would sing.[14] The leaders of the society were supposed to be present on these begging expeditions, otherwise their enemy-friends could take advantage of their absence and twit them by singing a special song.[15] The members of the society might be accompanied by their wives, who helped out in the singing, and usually a member of the society would suggest that they sing in front of the lodge belonging to his enemy-friend of the opposite society. If, while they were singing, the owner of the lodge failed to appear, his enemy-friend would peep into the lodge and at this the owner, assisted by his relatives, would get busy and give food to be used in the feast of the society which was doing the begging. If the owner of the lodge were a prominent man, who wished to take this occasion to enhance further his reputation, he might give something really valuable to the singers and would have the opportunity later of bragging: "On such-and-such an occasion, this is what I gave you Wolf-men (or Star men)." If he were a really good sport, our informants said, he would even send his wife out to sing with the others. After something had been given to the society, the singers sang other special songs,[16] while the rest danced.

After obtaining in this fashion the wherewithal for the feast, the society members lined up two-by-two at the entrance of the camp circle. The two noted men carrying whips remained mounted, while the column stepped in time to the music provided by the singers who were carrying the drum at the end of the procession. They wove in and out, snake-dance fashion, while

[14] A begging song of the Wolf-men was recorded as No. 98; two such songs of the Stars, as No. 96 and 97.

[15] Recorded as No. 101.

[16] Recorded as No. 95 and No. 100.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

575 796 the marching song was sung.[17] Upon reaching the entrance of the enclosure, which had been constructed in the middle of the camp circle, the double column parted, and filed around the inside of the enclosure and took their places. The noted men bearing whips, having been helped in dismounting, took up their positions at either side of the entrance, and the musicians carried the drum to the center of the enclosure where they provided the music for the dancing.

[243] The dance of each society was distinctive. The Stars carried rattles, each designed by its owner,[18] which they waved about, as they danced. The Wolf-men did not have rattles or any special paraphernalia of the kind, but symbolized wolves as they stepped about, one hand at the forehead, and the other held behind to represent the tail.

575 535 These dances with their preliminary "begging" expeditions were not put on regularly, but at the discretion of the societies. A time would be chosen when the whole tribe, or most of the bands thereof, were together, when there were no Sacred Dances in immediate prospect, and when there was no apparent danger from the enemy. If these conditions prevailed, one of the societies might proceed, singing loudly: "Harden your hearts, Wolf-men (or Stars)," meaning, "be prepared to give."[19] Not immediately, but some time later, when auspicious conditions again prevailed, the other society would "retaliate."

These dances were purely social. In between times members belonging to one would compete with members of the other in horse-racing, hand-game gambling, "bragging contests" recounting conquests in love and war—each trying to out-do his opposite number.

[177] Sometime between 1875 and 1880 the Wolf-men adopted the Grass Dance from the Assiniboine. Thereafter this Society was sometimes called the Grass dancers.[20]

575 The Boy was under the impression that the Stars and Wolf-men

[17] Recorded as No. 102.

[18] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 236–37, with illustration.

[19] These songs were recorded as Nos. 93, 94 for the Stars.

[20] Kroeber, 1908, p. 238 describes this dance as the "war-dance." For the adoption of the Grass Dance and subsequent history of the two societies, see Flannery, 1946, pp. 39–70.

3: Cooper
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NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[For information on organized religious ceremonial, see also category 116, pp. 44-54, 87-123, 148-157, 159-161, 173-177, 180-182, 184-221, and 224-252. -- Analyst]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

776 bätĕ, "he (who) has gristle (tendon from back of neck of animal) nose," and "black hawk," a certain very large black-feathered hawk known also locally as "bullet hawk" (*Buteo sp.?*). Another name for Bha'a was "old man four parts of the earth." Bha'a, the thunderbird, as was appropriate, had dark or black feathers, and was a swift flier; his bill and feet were of the same material as back tendon (see Blood-Clot Story, No. 11 in Appendix).

778 In the Gros Ventre Sacrifice Lodge, or "Sun dance," Bha'a
776 was represented near the top of the center pole as a bird, painted
● 796 black, with a buffalo tail fastened to his head as a sort of plume, with a zigzag line descending from the bird almost to the ground and ending in a fork, and with a bunch of branches stuck in the
[302] fork of the center pole of the lodge to represent Bha'a's nest. Each of the dancers painted all over in white had a bird representing Bha'a, painted in black with charcoal or paint on his upper center breast, with black zigzag lines ending in a fork from the bird's wings down each arm and forearm and from the bird's feet down each thigh and leg to his ankle, with a black zigzag line forked at each end across the forehead, and with a vertical red zigzag line forked at the lower end extending down from each eye. The
[534] drum-head used in the Feathered Pipe rite had a red background on which the Thunderbird was represented in blue, with a yellow zigzag line on either side from the head to the wings. Bha'a entered prominently into both the Sacrifice Lodge and the Feathered Pipe rite.

776 Any large strange animal might in the olden days be called
825 Bha'a or even be looked upon as an embodiment or theophany of Bha'a.*

One supposed theophany over which the present day Gros Ventres laugh heartily, is recorded on the occasion of their seeing their first mule. The story as told with verve and intense amusement by The Boy was as follows:

"The Gros Ventres used to move around a great deal. Once a mule, the first one the Gros Ventres had ever seen, got lost somehow, struck the Gros Ventres' trail, came to their camp and stopped. A Gros Ventre crier spied it and came back to camp

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

and as long as you live see that they do not sell it or part with it."

So at Curly Head's death the Pipe fell to Iron Man II (Tall Jack), a relative of Curly Head, who since 1937 (1938) has looked after it. In 1948 it was still being kept in Curly Head's house.[1]

The normal term of keepership of the Feathered Pipe was four years. The very first keeper held the office 80 years, according to the origin story given by Garter Snake, and some later ones, according to tradition, up to 20 years, but the usual limit was supposed to be at most two or three terms, that is eight or twelve years.

There was always a Pipe woman or co-keeper, wife of the keeper. She handled the Pipe bundle and in general had about the same ritual and other duties toward it as had the co-keeper of the Flat Pipe toward the Flat Pipe bundle. The Feathered Pipe keeper had to have at least two wives, for during her menses the co-keeper could not handle the bundle and had to sleep and live outside the keeper's lodge and another wife of the keeper had to substitute for her in the handling and care of the bundle.

There was always, too, a Pipe child,—a girl, unless the keeper had no daughters, in which case a son could be selected by him as Pipe child. Thus the oldest son of Sitting High, who had no daughters, became Pipe child. The Pipe child was not necessarily appointed at once by the keeper on assuming the keepership. Garter Snake was not made Pipe child until she was about six years old. Iron Necklace who had been Feathered Pipe keeper some

[1] In the summer of 1951, Iron Man, assisted by The Boy, had a ceremonial opening of the Feathered Pipe bundle. Dr. Louis B. Hagener, Professor of Biology of Northern Montana College, accompanied by his wife, and Dr. Otto Nitz, Professor of Chemistry, now at Stout Institute of Technology, Menominie, Wisconsin, were among the spectators. The pictures in Plates 2 B-C, 3 A-D, were taken by Dr. Nitz at that time. Dr. Hagener has kindly supplied information regarding the 1951 ceremonial. He writes under date of Aug. 8, 1954, as to final disposal of the Feathered Pipe bundle: "Since the young people were so apathetic over the bundle, its significance, and the ceremony, Iron Man and his wife had resolved not to open it again. They were debating as to whether it should be given to a museum or whether the tribe would outfit Iron Man and his wife for a journey and permit them to dispose of it somewhere in the mountains." [R.F.]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

cover him and so forth. This they did. When they uncovered him, there lay a human skeleton. They then covered, sang, and uncovered, and there was the 'short' himself. And all the 'shorts' cheered and shouted.

"At this point the principal men present stepped in: 'There is danger in this kind of contest. After a while there may be a fight.' So the contest came to an end.

"The Gros Ventres talked for a long time about this contest, and they still talk about it and wonder what would have happened if the principal men had not stepped in and stopped it."

The Crazy Dancers had to be, or by age or custom were, younger men, married or unmarried, fully adult but not yet middle-aged, "mature." They chose their ceremonial grandfathers from among those who had previously been through the Dance. From one to four,—but not more than four,—dancers could choose the same ceremonial grandfather, lest they should run out of grandfathers. Only those could be grandfathers who had never had sex relations with the wives or substitute women joining the dance with the respective grandson or group of two to four grandsons, and an actual shortage of grandfathers meeting this requirement was apt to be more than a theoretic one, at least in the later days when the Dance was given. In one case, in fact, still well remembered, the prospective Crazy Dancer had to hunt all over the tribe to get his ceremonial grandfather. According to Coming Daylight a man who joined the Crazy Dance a second time had to have the same grandfather whom he had had on the first occasion. Where two to four men combined to choose the same grandfather, one of one group served as a sort of leader for it. Apparently if the age-group putting on the dance belonged to the Stars, the grandfathers and grandfathers' helpers were chosen from the Wolves, and vice versa.

There was great reluctance on the part of older men to serve as Crazy Dance grandfathers, although, to judge from the previously quoted remarks of some of the younger men, there were probably exceptions to this rule. The reluctance shown was real, not make-believe, as the older men approached to be grandfathers might have to make embarrassing confessions and refuse, or if they accepted had to undergo a severe test of character, failure in which entailed grave penalty, as will be explained infra.

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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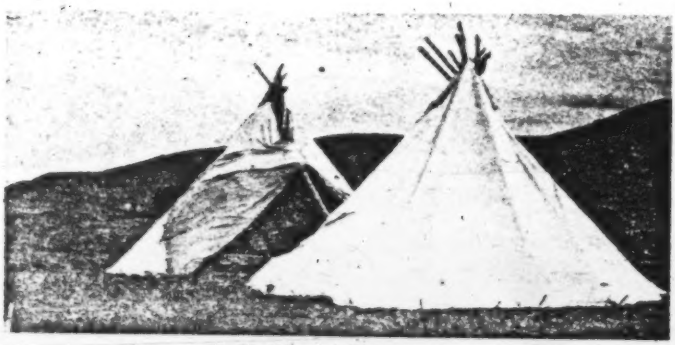

A. *Double tipi for ceremony.*

[301
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B. *The Boy prays with ordinary pipe.*

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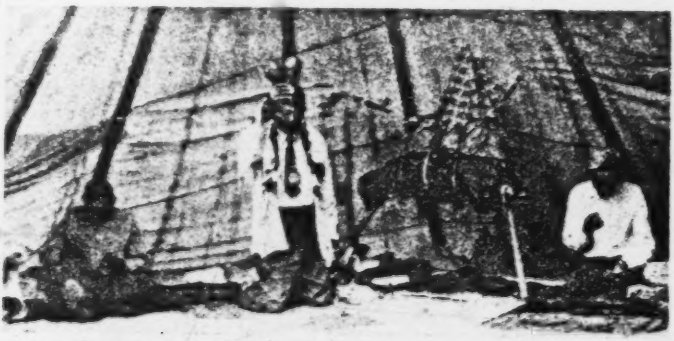

C. *The Boy smudges rattles over Flat Pipe hearth.*

PLATE I

[p.425]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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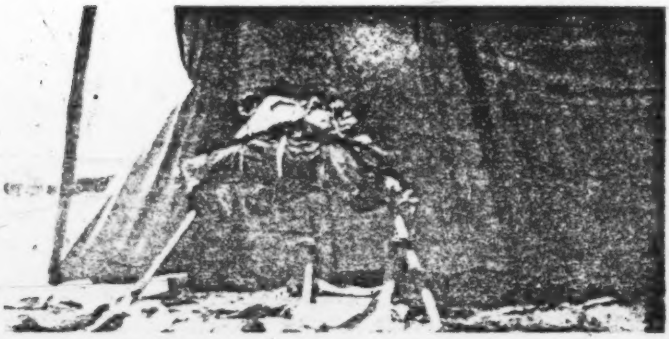
[401]



A. *Flat Pipe bundle on tripod.*

B. *Setting at opening of Feathered Pipe ceremonial.*

C. *Drum hung on tripod.*

PLATE 2

[p. 426]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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A. *Unwrapping Feathered Pipe bundle at hearth.*

B. *Contents of bundle.*

C. *One of the pipes in the bundle.*

D. *Iron Man II holding a pipe from bundle.*

PLATE 3

[p.427]

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

[P.39] PRIMITIVE MAN

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THE CHANGING FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GROS VENTRE GRASS DANCE

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THE purpose of the present paper is to discuss the changing form, and to show as far as possible the changing functions, of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture from the time of its introduction between 1875 and 1880 up to about 1920 when it had paled off to relative insignificance.

The Gros Ventre tribe of Montana was one of the many which adopted the Grass dance, sometimes called the Omaha dance, as it spread rapidly over the northern plains in relatively recent times. Wissler studied the distribution and diffusion of the Grass dance as a trait-complex,[1] basing his interpretation upon his own observations, especially among the Blackfeet, and on the descriptions of this dance as published for other tribes. For the Gros Ventres he depended mainly on Kroeber's data,[2] the only source available, but he himself had visited that tribe and collected, among other specimens, regalia used by them in the Grass

[1] Wissler, C., General discussion of shamanistic and dancing societies, AMNH-AP 11, pt. 12 1916, pp. 862–71.

[2] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, pp. 234, 238–39.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 114 dance.[3] Wissler was well aware of the importance of the Grass dance in the transition period of Plains culture from the old to the new, and suggested further studies be made. Nevertheless, no one has given us a close-up, so far as I know, of its dynamic aspects in the life of any one of the tribes who shared the phenomenon.

796 114 177 In 1901 Kroeber noted that the Grass dance as then performed by the Gros Ventres differed considerably in form from that which was described to him as having been the case when it was first adopted. He gives us a brief description of the earlier procedure, but naturally enough no details regarding the then current method of carrying out the Grass dance, since his concern was with the older tribal culture. He merely states: "It is no longer a young man's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people in the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held."[4] Our data, gathered during two visits to the Fort Belknap Reservation in 1940 and 1945, confirm Kroeber's and supplement them to a considerable extent.

121 128 In treating of the Grass dance then, we shall distinguish between an earlier period extending from between 1875 to 1880 up to about 1890, and a later period comprising the years from roughly 1890 to 1916. We shall first describe the form of the Grass dance as it was in the earlier period, then the changes which were later introduced, and finally we shall discuss the varying functions during both periods.

The Form: Earlier Period

796 177 171 According to Wissler the dance originated with the Dakota about 1860 and is traceable as a development of the older Pawnee

[3] These specimens are in the American Museum of Natural History. Some of those used in the Gros Ventre Grass dance have been described by Kroeber, loc. cit.: fork, pp. 270–71; spoon, p. 271; whip, p. 271; crow-belt, pp. 271–72.

[4] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Iruska.[5] In its diffusion it reached the Assiniboine from the Sioux, —Rodnick places the date at 1872,[6]—and the Assiniboine in turn passed it on to the Gros Ventres, sometime between the years 1875 and 1880. We arrive at this approximate dating by reckoning the age of a now venerable old Gros Ventre woman informant who witnessed the actual transfer when she herself was in her later twenties or possibly early thirties. From all the evidence at our command it is fairly certain that she was born between 1850 and 1855. This informant not only was an eye-witness of the adoption of the ceremony by the Gros Ventres but also participated actively, so far as a woman could, in both the earlier and later phases of the dance. Before giving details of the regalia, personnel, and procedures it might be well to insert at this point her account of the actual transfer.

"The Gros Ventres were camped on the Milk River. They were joined there by the Assiniboine and the two tribes remained together while the Assiniboine taught the Gros Ventres the Grass dance. The Gros Ventres had never had any dancing of that kind before and called it jokingly *inaetenin* (moving-buttocks) referring to the way they danced. The Assiniboine gave crow-belts (feather bustles) to each of two men, and likewise swords to two others. They needed one man as spear (fork) man and two as *atsa'an* (waiters, servants). They also gave the Gros Ventres a big drum and everything that goes with the dance. The visitors showed the different individuals how to use these various things and taught the songs and dances that went with each. But they didn't do all that for nothing! Of all the things they had to give away to the Assiniboine! Even food was included in the exchange. The Gros Ventres had an enormous quantity of food prepared and you should have seen the number of puppies we cooked. The Assiniboine surely liked those pups. That was the first Grass dance we ever had.

"Then we moved camp from the Milk River over toward the

[5] Wissler, loc. cit., cf. table opp. p. 868.

[6] Rodnick, David, The Fort Belknap Assiniboine of Montana, A study in culture change, New Haven, Conn., 1938, pp. 123–24.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 Bear Paw Mountains. It was there that the Gros Ventres had their first Grass dance alone. I don't know why they did things like this, but all those who had been given regalia walked instead of riding horseback. But the drum was packed on a special horse by itself and when they came to a stream, four men who owned the drumsticks carried the drum across, wading in without taking off their moccasins or other clothing. Furthermore those who owned the regalia were not supposed to help feed the crowd. They were not allowed to serve food and if they did, they had to give something away. Nor were these men supposed to borrow. They were supposed to have their own cup or dish and when it [415] was time to eat, if they didn't have any receptacle, they spread out their robes and the servers poured the coffee or soup or whatever was being served right in the robes."

114 174 796 The above account is the only explicit record of the actual transfer which was obtainable in the field. From details supplied by this same informant, however, as well as by others not so old as she, but who have accurate traditional knowledge of Gros Ventre culture, we have considerable information on the Grass dance as practiced from the time it was adopted.[7] Let us proceed then to the general description, first as the dance was carried out in the earlier period.

575 796 *Personnel and equipment.* At the time of adoption the Grass dance came into the possession of a society, the Wolves or Wolfmen. Only members of the society actually danced, wearing the distinctive headdress of deer hair, although the rest of their costume varied with the individual. The special regalia which went with the dance were: 2 crow-belts; a large drum and 4 fancy drumsticks; a spear or fork; a spoon; 2 wands representing swords; a whistle.[8] Each item was owned by an individual member of the society who was, by virtue of this ownership, an officer

[115] [7] I wish to thank all of my Gros Ventre friends for their assistance, especially The Boy, Thick, Thomas Main, Charles Buckman, Al and Cora Chandler, Mary Ereaux, Mathilda Cuts-the-Rope, but above all, my old "grandmothers," Coming Daylight and Singer.

[8] For reference to description of some of these, see footnote 3.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial equipment to other members whom they would select. Following the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description [9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

7 Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The
796 regalia were placed in front of their owners. Lay members sat around the sides.

[354] The fire was near the center of the dancing-place and beside
252 it the essential pot containing cooked dog flesh. The meat was
262 prepared by first rolling the carcass in very hot ashes to singe off
796 the hair and until the flesh was almost black, after which the entrails were removed and the meat boiled. Incidentally, the Gros Ventres were very fond of the flesh of puppies and used it in large quantities to supplement other types of food for feasts at various gatherings, including the Grass dance. The food for the feast, of which all present at the Grass dance partook, was heaped to the east of the fire.

796 In this setting the ceremonial eating of dog flesh, which involved the preliminary dancing with crow-belts, and so on, was carried out. We shall refer hereafter to this whole performance as the dog ritual because this is the core of the Grass dance proper wherever found and, so far as the Gros Ventres are concerned, remained essentially unchanged from the earlier through the later period. We use the term "ritual" without implying that there was any religious significance attached to the performance in the minds of the Gros Ventres. Connected therewith were a few sex prescriptions the violation of which were believed to be punished by vague misfortune, but that it had any deeper meaning for the Gros Ventres there is no evidence. On the contrary, their indifference toward possible symbolism, for instance, is illustrated by their acceptance at face value of the statement as to origin and meaning by an old Sioux from Fort Peck, Black Prairie Chicken, who claimed that he personally had created the Grass Dance, saying that he had "gotten his instructions" from a rooster; that the headdress of upstanding red-dyed deer hair
796 represented the rooster's comb and that the so-called crow-belt
177 was in reality a rooster's tail. My older informants knew this old man when he visited the Reservation many years ago, and they assured me that although the validity of his story was not questioned, it had had no effect. They maintained that when the dance was transferred to them, the Assiniboine had not mentioned

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

where it had come from or anything about its origin, so the Gros Ventres simply performed it in the way it had been taught. They continued to dance in the same way, and never at any time did they feel that the dance was connected with the white man's rooster, or that they were supposed to be imitating that type of fowl.

The ceremonial involved the donning of the crow-belts by their respective owners, preceded by the incensing of the owners and of the regalia. The song connected with the crow-belt had four stanzas, each repeated four times while the owners danced. One of the owners then lifted the pot containing the already prepared dog flesh and, walking clockwise, placed it in the proper position to the north of the fire. The two crow-belt owners and the owners of the fork and spoon then knelt to the west of the fire while the owners of the swords and their two *atsa'an* (servants, assistants) knelt opposite them on the other side of the fire. These eight, as they knelt, danced by raising their bodies up and down to the rhythm of a special song which was sung once by the four male singers, repeated "like a chorus" during which the drum was beaten slowly and the four women singers joined in. As the chorus was sung the dancers raised their arms as though in salute. This song, with chorus, was repeated four times. After this the eight rose and, to the accompaniment of another song, danced in single file, the owners of the crow-belts in the lead and second place. They circled the fire four times, at the beginning of each circuit hesitating for a moment at the pot and making a gesture toward it. The dancing became more violent with each round and, on the fourth, the dancers "put on quite a show," stamping harder than before and using great exertion. On this fourth round each one touched the pot and the last one in line, one of the *atsa'an*, grabbed it up and put it to the west of the fire. The eight dancers would be panting and tired by this time.

The second crow-belt owner, however, transferred his belt to the fork owner who then danced alone. He followed the same pattern of first dancing slowly, and, at the beginning of each round making merely a gesture toward the pot. On the fourth

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 circuit, when the tempo and vigor of the dance had appreciably increased, he finally speared the dog flesh, leaving his fork in the pot while he stood there resting for a few moments.

When the fork owner had somewhat recovered his breath, he took the dog flesh from the pot and put it in a big dish nearby. He then went to an outstanding warrior and, taking him by the hand, invited him to come up to the dish. In the same way he selected two other prominent warriors. One of these then asked some member of the society to select a fourth warrior, but this one must have been wounded at war. When he had been named, the fork owner invited him and led him to join the other three who were sitting in a semicircle facing the fire.

The owner of the crow-belt removed the feather-bustle from the fork man and tied it around the spoon owner. Then another song was started and the spoon owner went to the space between the fire and entrance to begin his circuit of the fire. He exhibited his graceful body with his best steps as he made three motions with the spoon over the heads of the seated warriors. On the fourth time he touched the meat with the spoon. After a short pause and when he was breathing more normally after his strenuous dancing, he touched the meat with the spoon and, having raised the spoon first upward and then downward, laid it on the tongue of each of the first three warriors. The warrior who had asked for the selection of the wounded warrior took the spoon and laid it on the tongue of that one.

796 688 Had any one of the four warriors indulged a short time previously in sexual intercourse, he was supposed not to allow the spoon to touch his tongue and refused by turning aside his head, thereby making a public confession. It would have done him no good to have refused to come to the center of the dancing-place when first invited because his hanging back would have caused even more attention and he would have been subjected to vulgar jeers. It was said by informants that occasionally one or another warrior would ignore the rule but that this was a dangerous thing to do. As a case in point it was related that one man, known to my informants, tried to get by with it and allowed the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

spoon to touch his tongue regardless of consequences. Some hours later in the excitement accompanying the end of the dance, this man's horse was jumping around and broke loose, was chased by a dog and ran against a log projecting from the corner of a corral. The horse was killed. The owner then admitted that this bad luck had befallen him because he had falsely allowed himself to be honored at the dance.

Following upon the performance with the spoon, the dog meat was next distributed to the four warriors, the wounded warrior receiving the head. When the meat was eaten the skull was put down to the west of the fire. The four warriors remained seated while the other members danced for some time. So soon, however, as the singers switched to the appropriate music, the spoon owner dashed to the dog skull and pointed the skull in four directions, and the four warriors danced around, everybody else rising to dance at his place, yelling and calling out, while this song with chorus was sung once. All were then seated except the warriors who pranced around the fire four times. After this each of the four warriors in turn picked up the dog skull, pointed it in the direction in which he had accomplished the particular war deed he was to recount, and related his story. If one of them had been forced to refuse the spoon, the owner of the spoon would have to point the dog skull for him while the warrior talked and gestured. The warrior who had been wounded spoke last, and when he finished he tossed the dog skull outside of the dancing-place.

The owner of the whistle had a particular dance. When the accompaniment started, it was stated, " for some reason he did not dance alone. It seemed that all the members were glad and danced with him and kind of helped him. The song was repeated three more times. At the end of each ' stanza ' the owner of the whistle would dance at the edge of the circle, apart from and very much faster than the other dancers." It was his privilege, too, to " punish " the dancers. At a signal from the owner of the whistle, the singers would switch to the " punishing songs " of which there were said to have been ten in all. No one could drop out of the dancing while these were being sung. Each of the ten songs could

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533 177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed by another, the husband would want her back again. An instance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

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[533] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

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[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter. her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the

796 Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the Gros Ventres from the time of its adoption from the Assiniboine up to about 1890 when changes began creeping in.

The Form: Later Period

796 178 It should perhaps be emphasized at this point that the changes which characterized the Grass dance after 1890 were mostly in the nature of accretions around the nucleus as originally adopted, so that, although in 1901 the form of the Grass dance differed somewhat from the earlier form, as Kroeber noted,[13] the whole was still distinctly recognizable as an expansion thereof.

Changes in personnel and equipment. At the turn of the century participation in the Grass dance was no longer restricted to members of a particular society. Everybody was free to join in. The Grass dance was, however, in charge of four officials, the "chiefs" who sat in the place of honor opposite the door and presided over the ceremony (Fig. 1). They were consulted on any matters pertaining to the performance, made rules, sometimes arbitrarily, during the dance, and were custodians of any fines collected. They were responsible for seeing to it that provisions were on hand when a dance was to be held. There were, moreover, two women officials, whose rank was said to be equal to that of the "chiefs" and whose insignia were ceremonial dresses of black cloth. These two sat to the right of the four chiefs.

[625] The orders of the "chiefs" were enforced by two men who sat, one on either side of the door, holding whips with ornamental handles. These whips were apparently a simple substitution for the wands representing swords in the original Grass dance. The whip owners each had an assistant who ran errands and attended to getting water, keeping up the fire and so on. An entirely new feature was, however, the addition of two women who owned whips and their two female assistants. They likewise sat on each side of the door but behind the men. When it was time for the women to dance,—another innovation to which we shall refer later,—the women whip owners rose and danced in opposite di-

[13] Kroeber, A. L., Ethnology of the Gros Ventre, AMNH-AP 1, pt. 4, 1908, p. 238.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

rections around the circle. It was understood that if any woman had not risen to dance by the time those holding whips reached her, she would be lashed. These four women had the additional duty of helping serve when it was time for the general feast.

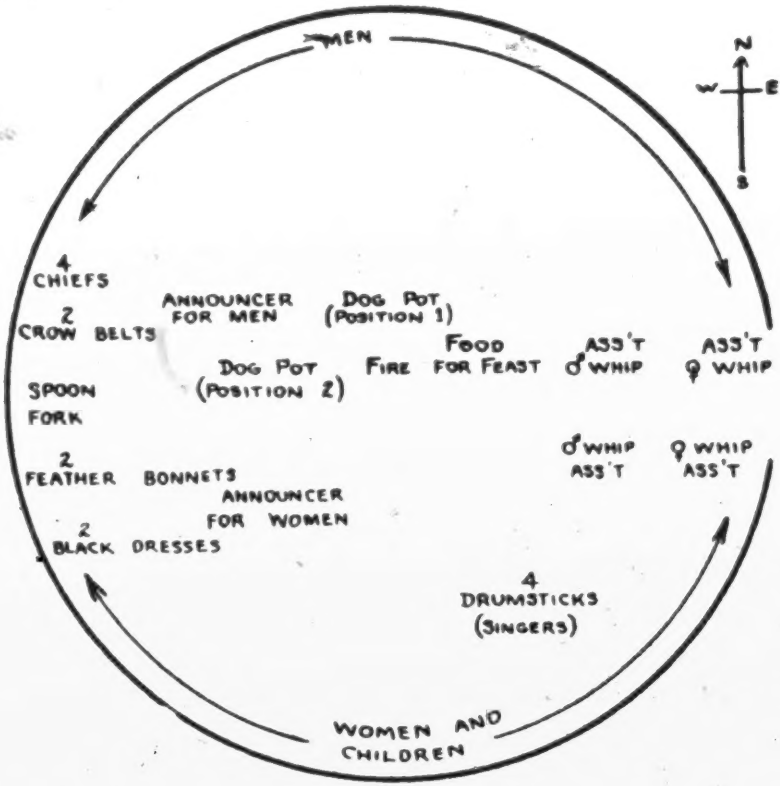


Fig. 1. Diagram of Dance Ground.

Considered as next in rank to the four "chiefs" were the four male singers, who, as in former times, owned the special drumsticks "decorated and official-looking, like emblems." They were expected to know faultlessly all of the many songs connected with the Grass dance as first adopted. If they should, for instance,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 the original Grass dance, the number participating, however, both as officers and as general audience, being very much larger.

Although the dog ritual, carried out as described for the earlier period, remained the highlight and climax of the Grass dance, the general program had been enlarged to include other features. Not only were procedures introduced in connection with the newer offices, as indicated above, but other items such as the Owl dance and the Ringtail dance were introduced. The order of events was apparently determined by the "chiefs" at each performance of the Grass dance, but the general program did not vary markedly. The Ringtail dance, for instance, was always included at some time.

When the order for the Ringtail dance was given, any who wished to participate formed a circle facing inward and both men and women were free to choose partners of the opposite sex. The man placed his arm over the shoulders of his partner while she placed her arm around his back. The whole group moved in a circle clockwise in rhythm to the music provided by a group of singers other than those who sang and drummed for the dog ritual and other ceremonies in which officers as such participated. [887] Any middle-aged or older woman who wished to do so might join the singers for any of the round dances. If none volunteered then they were sometimes drafted simply by being invited and led over to the spot where the male singers were performing.

796 533 178 It occasionally happened that during this dance, when the singers had "hit the spot,"—aroused the spirit of the crowd and the floor was full,—the singers would stop all of a sudden, but without giving the usual signal to disperse. Then, without advance notice, they would start singing again, but a different song, a "punishing song." This was a feature obviously based on the "punishing songs" of the original Grass dance, but the tunes were different and it was carried out in the following way.

There were only two of these newer "punishing songs" but as soon as the dancers heard the singers start one of them they knew what it meant: "Now we are in for it. We will have to dance and dance!" The singers could sing the first of these

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one switched to the others. There was no intermission and the dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

796 178 533 [625 681] were supposed to come prepared with pipe, tobacco, and matches in anticipation of this song. If, for some reason, one of the four was unable to furnish at least a pipeful of mixture, and could not borrow one, he was immediately arrested by the owners of the whips and punished by the singers who might tear his shirt at the neck so everyone could see it, or, perhaps, pour over him a good cupful of broth made from dog flesh. This broth has a strong and lasting odor. The female officers were likewise expected to give the women singers a smoke. The smoking song marked an intermission. No one danced to this song and all sat around smoking and taking it easy.

796 178 If things got too dull, however, one of the owners of the whips might get up, call the announcer, and say: "Tell my friends that I am going to whip them if they don't dance. I will have the right to whip them because I am going to pay for it," and he would present a bridle, or perhaps five dollars, or something of that order of magnitude, to anyone he wished. It was understood, then, that the next time the singing started this man might hit any person,—even one of the "chiefs,"—who failed to dance.

Another feature reminiscent of the original Grass dance but showing some slight change, was the provision that anyone who wished might have it announced that he was going to "lock the door," which meant that nobody could go home until the dance was over. For doing this however he had to provide all the necessary food for another Grass dance to be held on the night immediately following. It was up to the owners of the whips to enforce the regulation by taking something valuable, say a hat [689] or a blanket, from anyone who left the dance and the article was forfeit if he failed to return.

796 178 626 Based on the same concept, the practice grew up of forcing attendance in the following way. Once in a while the owners of the whips might order their assistants to go from door to door in the whole community and take something belonging to each householder, say a bridle, or a valuable belt, or a gun, and bring it to the dancing-place. If the owner of the object were not at the dance, his property was returned to him only if he promised

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed.

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people

796 178 431 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 178 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 178 858 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as practised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

formance of the Grass dance, but that he was also paying for this by cancelling debts owed him at his store by four specific individuals whom he named; that anyone who objected to the children having the privilege would have to raise the ante; and that finally he would inaugurate this new feature of the Grass dance by having all of his own children dance first. No one disputed the point, and from that day to this children have had the freedom of the floor at any of the social gatherings.

The innovation described above was probably one of the last changes made in the form of the Grass dance before it began to disintegrate about 1916. Once the dog ritual was abandoned,—seemingly just prior to 1920,—the Grass dance as such disappeared, leaving only the round dances, one or two of which survive today and are performed at annual fairs, at celebrations of the Fourth of July, and so on.

Let us now turn to a consideration of the functions of the Grass dance in Gros Ventre culture in each of the two periods.

Functions

Earlier period. When the Grass dance was first adopted by the Gros Ventres its function was a relatively minor one of replacing the dance belonging to one of the two "soldier" societies, the Wolves, or Wolf-men as the members were called. The members of the parallel society were known as Stars. These two societies were approximately equal numerically and included between them the whole Gros Ventres population of able-bodied warriors. At the age of 18 or 19 the individual Gros Ventre young man who, together with say 30-50 of his age-mates, already belonged to one of several "companies"—the Rosebushes, or Calves, or Resting-on-the-breast-of-a-woman, or Holding-dogs'-tails, and so forth,—would enter either the Wolf society or the Star society, whichever one was selected by the "company." The individual would then be either a Wolf-dancer or a Star-dancer, although he retained close personal association with the members of his "company" which would have entered one society or the other as a body. With the mates of his "company" he would then go through the

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 575 preliminary to the series of Sacred Dances, namely the Fly Dance. After this ceremony was over he was eligible as a "soldier." That is, should one of the members of his "company" vow to give any one of the Sacred Dances in the series, he and other members of the society to which he belonged—either Wolf or Star—would act as police for the time during which the Dance was being held. Thus it was that Stars might police the hunt [625] and keep order in the camp circle during one such Sacred Dance while Wolves might perform the same duties at another time, depending on which moiety the vower belonged to.

When not engaged as soldiers in connection with one of the Dances, the two societies exhibited the keenest rivalry, particularly in war-deeds, but also in gambling, in foot-racing, and whenever else opportunity offered. One aspect of this rivalry was apparent when each put on its own dance. The general procedure of both was identical but there were a few distinctive features. When the whole tribe was together and there was no serious threat of war, one society or the other would decide the time was ripe to hold its dance. Let us assume that the Star society had so decided.

The members of the Star society would then don their best clothes and, mounted on their finest horses, go around the camp circle accompanied by two especially prominent members who had counted coup against the enemy while on horseback. They would [533] sing special begging songs in front of the lodges of several well-to-do members of the opposite society. It was a challenge to the Wolf-men and they usually responded in the accepted fashion by giving large quantities of food, in which their relatives would help them out. This would provide the feast at the dance. The Stars then proceeded to the opening of the camp circle and all dismounting except the two very prominent warriors, formed in a line by twos, the four singers with their hand drums last. To the accompaniment of a marching song the line moved "snake-dance" fashion weaving back and forth, to the dancing lodge which had been erected in the center of the camp circle. At the entrance to the lodge the line divided, some going to the right,

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

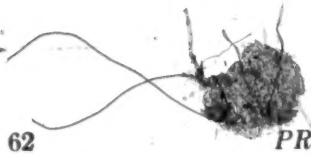
others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the participants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organization, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13



796 boine themselves considered the Grass dance as a modern form
575 of one of their own older soldier society dances.[15] Secondly there
178 were certain similarities between the original Star and Wolf dances on the one hand and the Grass dance on the other. In both types there was dancing to exhaustion and the employment of special officers to rouse the laggards,—the whip men in the first instance, the sword men in the other. Again women singers helped out occasionally in both. Still another feature in common was the custom of giving presents away, not to a relative who was a member, but in honor of that relative. Thus, the Grass dance became a part of Gros Ventres culture.

182 So long as Gros Ventre culture continued on its traditional eco-
178 nomic basis, the hunting of buffalo, the Grass dance fulfilled its function as the dance of the Wolf soldier society and was simply parallel to the dance of the rival Star society. The disappearance of the buffalo, however, wrought many changes in Gros Ventre life as it did in that of all of the Plains tribes. The Gros Ventres were fortunate in that the last large herd of buffalo happened to be in their hunting territory and thus they could benefit a little longer than most of their neighbors from this mainstay of their old way of life. This is not to say that prior to the extinction of the buffalo Gros Ventre culture was flourishing in pristine glory. Far from it. For one thing, at the time of the adoption of the
[177] Grass dance between 1875 and 1880, intertribal warfare, with which many aspects of their culture were interrelated, was at a minimum and was itself soon to disappear. Again, certain aspects of their ceremonial life had fallen into disuse, some of the Sacred Dances not having been given for years previously. Nevertheless, although the religious culture was dwindling, much was still left and the social side was relatively intact.

182 *Later period.* The break in economic life with the killing of
796 the last of the buffalo in 1884 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of the Gros Ventre ceremonial organization. The public rites of a religious nature, which had formerly made for social solidarity as well, were abandoned. The last Sacrifice

[15] Lowie, loc. cit. p. 66.

Dance (Sun Dance), for example, was given in that very year and, so far as our data go, but one Crazy Dance was held after that. The seasonal Flat Pipe rite was discontinued. Furthermore there was a breakdown in the socio-political life. The necessity for nomadic life had disappeared and as a consequence there was no longer need of policing the hunt or keeping order in the camp circle when the whole tribe gathered so that, with the further establishment of peace, the raison d'être for two rival soldier societies was gone.

In the transition period the missionaries were trying valiantly to fill the gap in religious life but did not offer a satisfactory solution for the social situation; nor did the Agency which had become the center of the new economic life. It was the Grass dance, which as we have seen survived in a somewhat changed form, that seems to have filled the void left in social life.

In its earlier form the Grass dance was purely social in nature, as was the Star dance, but the latter faded away while the former attained a position of heightened importance. One of the factors accounting for this fact seems to be that the Grass dance "had more to it," as our informants put it. The performance of the dog ritual was certainly far more spectacular than the simpler dance of the Star society and, in addition, it had semi-ceremonial connotations reminiscent of other features of the older Gros Ventre culture which were lacking from the Star dance. For example, the owners of the regalia in the Grass dance were likewise officers of several degrees of importance therein, as was the case in the performance of the Sacred Dances. Again, sex abstinence was required before dancing with the crow-belts as it was before participating in the Sacrifice Dance (Sun Dance) and before dancing with the Feathered Pipe. Ceremonial incensing of persons and equipment had been a marked characteristic of Gros Ventre religious life. The formal transfer of office and regalia duplicates the pattern of transfer of office of Pipe Keeper, transfer of painted lodges, and so on. Recounting of war deeds was frequently demanded in connection with many aspects of Gros Ventre life,—to validate the giving of a name, the erection of a

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 new lodge, certain practices in connection with the Flat Pipe, as well as in the dog ritual of the Grass dance. All in all the Grass dance was so much more colorful that, with choice left strictly to the individual, as it was after the "companies" were no longer formed, it seems probable that greater and greater numbers elected to join the Grass dancers. In time the Star society consequently lacked sufficient recruits to maintain its identity.

796 178 The addition of the round dances, such as the Ringtail, around the dog ritual nucleus, allowed all to actively participate. In this way the Grass dance provided occasion for group recreational outlets, while at the same time fulfilling another function formerly carried out by the public religious rites, namely, that of enhancing the feeling of social solidarity. One aspect of the public religious rites had been a nice balance in their performance between periods of ritual solemnity and those of secular gaiety and relaxation. The Grass dance now approximated this situation to some degree in the reserve which the audience maintained during the performance of the ceremonial parts of the dog ritual, and the verve with which it entered into the other parts of the program, especially the round dances. If one may judge from the enthusiasm expressed by informants who knew the Grass dance between 1900 and 1916, it was a most stimulating and enjoyable affair. Each performance drew in a large proportion of the tribe, even those from the far corners of the Reservation.

In spite of its ceremonial features, the Grass dance was always looked upon as social rather than religious, and it could be given at any time. It thus became the accepted manner of entertaining the frequent visitors from other tribes and furthermore was eminently adapted to form the central part of Fourth of July celebrations and the like. [574]

We have seen that in its later phase the Grass dance became more highly organized with the addition of new offices and a few new items of equipment. The expansion of offices meant retaining and underlining the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated while allowing for shifting emphases to different types of ability.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

The addition of the four "chiefs" of the Grass dance gave scope for public recognition of the middle-aged men of substance esteemed for their wisdom and judgment to whom office-holding proportionate for their dignity was otherwise denied. Although there was no longer opportunity for the ranks of warriors to swell, those who had in the past performed brave deeds could still gain status by being called upon to publicly recount them at the ceremonial eating of dog flesh and by being selected to handle the feathered bonnets.

As the younger men had no chance to show their prowess in warfare and hunting, there was a change of emphasis to recognition of superior singing and dancing ability as one of the roads to public approval. This latter was brought out clearly by our informants when explaining the qualifications of those sought for the various officers of the Grass dance as it was performed around the turn of the century.

They stated that much of the success of the performance of the Grass dance depended particularly on the singers of the dog ritual songs. The four singers who owned the ceremonial drumsticks were chosen for their good voices and from among the "lively men who liked to do things." The candidates did not have to know the songs in advance because they could be trained. Two noted teachers were The Boy and Joe Big Beaver. The Boy said he used to "campaign against himself" when it was time for a drumstick to be transferred because "he didn't want to get tied down. He enjoyed dancing and the singers never got a chance to participate." Our informants told us of two men who are remembered especially as being outstanding singers and drummers, Ed Rider and Breath. The latter was described as a top-ranking singer who, so far as they knew, had never been surpassed. They said: "It was something worth listening to when Breath started those Grass dance songs. He had a voice adapted to that kind of singing and his sense of rhythm was superb. He could hold a big crowd of people spellbound. He was a real genius. Many others tried to copy him and learn from him, but none ever succeeded in equalling him. Regardless of his fine voice no one

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 555 even acquired his technique for beating the drum, that is, of beginning lightly and then, in an inimitable manner, of increasing the volume. Sometimes the other three singers would let him begin a song and sing it through once just to listen to him. He was left-handed, but he sure could beat the drum! He was a man of whom you could say he had a real personality as far as the Grass dance was concerned but who was not so noticeable outside this one field. He was always deliberate but as soon as he approached the dancing-place he seemed to come alive. He was good at that office in the Grass dance and he knew it. He would sit up at the drum as straight as a lord and never attempted to be inconspicuous as, for instance, by putting his hat down over his eyes. Many of the young fellows who usually didn't join in the dancing and liked to play around on the outside would nevertheless rush from every direction to get to the floor when they saw him coming."

796 While singing had always held an important place in Gros Ventre religious culture, in the past the emphasis had been on the meaning of the song far more than on the quality of the voice and the manner of performing as it was in the Grass dance. Similarly in times gone by what dancing there was in the various rites was more or less perfunctory, whereas in the Grass dance the ownership of the two crow-belts, the fork, the spoon, and the whistle was transferred to those among the younger men who had [554] physical vigor and endurance as well as grace. For these offices "it took a good-looking young man in good physical condition to perform properly."

796 178 562 A still greater innovation was the inclusion of women as officers of the Grass dance. The two ceremonial black dresses were seemingly symbolic of the black paint used in the Victory dance of former years, especially in view of the fact that this was one of the few dances performed by women in the old culture. It should be mentioned, however, that in connection with the Victory dance there had been no formal office nor had the participants therein been under economic obligations. We might hazard the guess that the ownership by women of two of the war-bonnets in

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one. As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

Other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones.

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before.

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916.

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies.

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

796 178 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, however, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 178 554 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly [431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 182 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.